

Official Report of the
One Hundred Fifty-first
Annual General

CONFERENCE

of The Church of Jesus Christ
of Latter-day Saints

held in the Tabernacle
Salt Lake City, Utah

April 4 and 5, 1981

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Published by
The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints
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Printed in the United States of America

THE ONE HUNDRED FIFTY-FIRST ANNUAL GENERAL CONFERENCE OF THE CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST OF LATTER-DAY SAINTS

The 151st Annual General Conference of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints convened in the Tabernacle on Temple Square in Salt Lake City, Utah, on Saturday, April 4, 1981, at 10:00 A.M.

The general sessions of the conference were held at 10:00 A.M. and 2:00 P.M. on Saturday and Sunday, April 4 and 5, 1981. The general welfare session was held in the Tabernacle on Saturday, April 4, 1981, at 7:00 A.M. The general priesthood meeting was held in the Tabernacle on Saturday, April 4, 1981, beginning at 7:00 P.M.

President Spencer W. Kimball presided at all sessions of the conference and conducted the welfare, Saturday afternoon, and Sunday morning sessions. President Marion G. Romney, Second Counselor in the First Presidency, conducted the Saturday morning, general priesthood, and Sunday afternoon sessions of the conference.

At the Saturday morning session, Elder Angel Abrea was sustained as a new member of the First Quorum of the Seventy.

Television and radio stations carried portions or all of some of the conference sessions to large audiences throughout the world. The general priesthood session was carried by closed-circuit transmission to approximately 2,246 locations in many different countries.

General Authorities present

The following General Authorities of the Church attended one or more of the general sessions:

The First Presidency: Spencer W. Kimball, N. Eldon Tanner, Marion G. Romney.

The Council of the Twelve: Ezra Taft Benson, Mark E. Petersen, LeGrand Richards, Howard W. Hunter, Gordon B. Hinckley, Thomas S. Monson, Boyd K. Packer, Marvin J. Ashton, Bruce R. McConkie, L. Tom Perry, David B. Haight, and James E. Faust.

The First Quorum of the Seventy:
Presidents: Franklin D. Richards, J. Thomas Fyans, Neal A. Maxwell, Carlos E. Asay, M. Russell Ballard, Dean L. Larsen, and Royden G. Derrick. *Additional Members:* Marion D. Hanks, A. Theodore Tuttle, Theodore M. Burton, Paul H. Dunn, Hartman Rector, Jr., Loren C. Dunn, Robert L. Simpson, Rex D. Pinegar, Wm. Grant Bangerter, Robert D. Hales, Adney Y. Komatsu, Joseph B. Wirthlin, Gene R. Cook, Charles A. Didier, William R. Bradford, George P. Lee, John H. Groberg, Jacob de Jager, Vaughn J. Featherstone, Robert E. Wells, G. Homer Durham, James M. Paramore, Richard G. Scott, Hugh W. Pinnock, F. Enzio Busche, Yoshihiko Kikuchi, Ronald E. Poelman, Derek A. Cuthbert, Robert L. Backman, Rex C. Reeve, Sr., F. Burton Howard, Teddy E. Brewerton, Jack H. Goasland, Jr., and Angel Abrea.

The Presiding Bishopric: Victor L. Brown, H. Burke Peterson, and J. Richard Clarke.

Emeritus General Authorities: Eldred G. Smith, S. Dilworth Young, Sterling W. Sill, Henry D. Taylor, Bernard P. Brockbank, James A. Cullimore, Joseph Anderson, John H. Vandenberg, and O. Leslie Stone.

Other authorities present

Other authorities of the Church in attendance included Regional Rep-

representatives, presidents of stakes and their counselors, presidents of temples, bishoprics of wards, and presidencies and members of the

Aaronic and Melchizedek priesthood quorums.

Many general, stake, and ward auxiliary officers also attended.

FIRST DAY MORNING MEETING

FIRST SESSION

The first general session of the conference convened in the Tabernacle on Temple Square in Salt Lake City, Utah, on Saturday, April 4, 1981, at 10:00 A.M. President Spencer W. Kimball presided at this session. President Marion G. Romney, Second Counselor in the First Presidency, conducted.

The music for the opening session was provided by the Tabernacle Choir with Donald Ripplinger conducting and Robert Cundick at the organ.

Before the commencement of the meeting, the Tabernacle Choir sang "For the Strength of the Hills" without announcement.

President Romney then made the following remarks:

President Marion G. Romney

President Spencer W. Kimball, who presides at this conference, has asked that I conduct this first general session.

We welcome all assembled in the Tabernacle on Temple Square at the beginning of this, the first general session of the 151st Annual General Conference of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. We also welcome all others who are participating by television, radio, and direct wire.

Seated on the stand are all of the General Authorities of the Church ex-

cept Elders Carlos E. Asay and Charles Didier who are presiding in the Salt Palace. Present also are other general leaders and many local Church leaders from around the world.

We extend a special welcome to government, education, and civic leaders who are present.

We also express gratitude that President Ronald Reagan and those who were injured at the same time appear to be convalescing satisfactorily and extend our love and best wishes to them.

The Tabernacle Choir, under the direction of Donald Ripplinger with Robert Cundick at the organ, rendered the opening hymn, "For the Strength of the Hills." This session will continue by the Choir singing "Jesus! Name of Wondrous Love." Following the singing, the invocation will be offered by Elder J. Thomas Fyans, a member of the Presidency of the First Quorum of the Seventy.

The Choir sang "Jesus! Name of Wondrous Love."

Elder J. Thomas Fyans offered the invocation.

The Choir sang "Praise to the Lord" without announcement.

President Romney

The Tabernacle Choir has just rendered "Praise to the Lord."

It is proposed that we sustain Brother Angel Abrea as a member of the First Quorum of the Seventy.

All in favor, please manifest it. Any opposed, so manifest it.

With the exception of Elder Abrea, whom you have just sustained, there have been no other changes among the General Authorities since the last general conference. It is proposed, therefore, that we sustain all of

the General Authorities and general officers of the Church as at present constituted.

All in favor, manifest it. Contrary, if there be any, by the same sign.

We shall now be pleased to hear from our beloved friend and leader, President Spencer W. Kimball, President of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.

President Spencer W. Kimball

Once again I rejoice, my brothers and sisters, at the opportunity to be with you in a general conference of the Church. In many ways, the October conference of six months ago seems like yesterday, yet we have been so busy, and so much has happened, it almost seems more like six years.

Since last we met in this historic Tabernacle, two new temples have been dedicated, and ground has been broken for four more temples. New converts who joined the Church in 1980 numbered 210,777 — and there will be even more in 1981. A miraculous upsurge in the work of the Lord has occurred among the wonderful people of the Caribbean Islands. Surely the Lord has blessed us abundantly!

Our message is to proclaim, perfect, redeem

My brothers and sisters, as the Brethren of the First Presidency and the Twelve have meditated upon and prayed about the great latter-day work the Lord has given us to do, we are impressed that the mission of the Church is threefold:

- To proclaim the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ to every nation, kindred, tongue, and people;

- To perfect the Saints by preparing them to receive the ordinances

of the gospel and by instruction and discipline to gain exaltation;

- To redeem the dead by performing vicarious ordinances of the gospel for those who have lived on the earth.

All three are part of one work—to assist our Father in Heaven and His Son, Jesus Christ, in Their grand and glorious mission “to bring to pass the immortality and eternal life of man.” (Moses 1:39.)

Having these sacred principles in mind—to *proclaim the gospel, to perfect the Saints, and to redeem the dead*—we have endeavored these past six months to carry out our responsibilities among the Saints at home and abroad. I should like, therefore, to give you a brief report on my stewardship since last we met in October 1980.

Conferences and temples in Orient

Ten days after the close of the October conference, President Marion G. Romney and I left, in company with a number of others, to conduct area conferences in the Orient. Our first meetings were held in Manila, Philippine Islands, October 18 and 19, where twenty thousand Saints attended the sessions in the Araneta Colosseum. We also looked over possible sites for the new temple which has just been an-

Saturday, April 4

First Day

nounced for that land. We had a very pleasant visit with Philippine President Ferdinand E. Marcos, who gave up his Saturday morning with his family to meet with us at the presidential palace.

From Manila we traveled to Hong Kong, perhaps the world's most densely populated city, where there are about four hundred thousand people per square mile. There we held meetings in our own excellent stake center on October 20 and 21. The following day we flew to Taipei, Taiwan, where we met on October 22 and 23 in the beautiful Sun Yat-sen Memorial Hall. We had breakfast at our hotel with the two top leaders of the Republic of China, Prime Minister Sun and President Chiang, son of the late Chiang Kai-shek. We later had lunch as guests of the governor of Taiwan Province. After leaving Taiwan, we went to Seoul, South Korea, the "Land of the Morning Calm." Meetings were held for two days, October 25 and 26. We met outside in the Korea Seoul Mission compound with more than six thousand present in bitter, subfreezing temperature due to an overnight change in the weather. At our hotel we had lunch as guests of the former Deputy Prime Minister of Korea.

We arrived in Tokyo late Sunday evening, October 26. On Monday, October 27, President Romney and I laid the cornerstone for the Tokyo Temple, and then at 3:00 P.M. the first dedicatory session was held in the celestial room, with color television provided in all other rooms of the temple. During the next two days, six more dedicatory sessions were held. Following the dedication of the temple, the Tokyo area conference was held on October 30 and 31 in the famed Budokan Hall. In every place we visited we also held special meetings with the missionaries, with fifteen hundred being present in one meeting in Tokyo. It was indeed a

thrilling and inspiring sight to see. On Saturday, November 1, we held morning and afternoon sessions of the Osaka, Japan, area conference. We left that evening to fly home, stopping off in Hawaii for three hours for the purpose of setting apart several sealers for the Hawaii Temple.

Provo and Seattle

On November 14, we installed Dr. Jeffrey R. Holland as the ninth president of the Brigham Young University, succeeding newly appointed Utah Supreme Court justice Dallin H. Oaks.

Three days later, the First Presidency traveled to Seattle, Washington, where we dedicated the new Seattle Temple at nearby Bellevue. Monday through Friday, November 17 to 21, thirteen dedicatory sessions were well attended. Over forty-three thousand members from the great Northwest attended the various sessions.

There followed a very busy period at home during the Thanksgiving and Christmas seasons.

Temples and meetings in South Pacific

On Wednesday, February 11, 1981, Sister Kimball and I journeyed to the South Pacific. In Tahiti we broke ground for a new temple in Papeete and met with the missionaries. We also visited with the Deputy to the High Commissioner of Tahiti at the official government residence.

On Saturday, February 14, enroute to New Zealand, we stopped over in Rarotonga and held a meeting with the Saints in an airplane hangar at the airport. I am told it was the first time a President of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints has ever visited that island.

In New Zealand we held a meeting with several hundred Saints on the grounds of the Auckland Airport. We conducted meetings at the temple and the Church College of New Zealand and with the missionaries. On Wednesday, the eighteenth, we flew to Tonga, where we broke ground for the new temple in a beautiful coconut grove at Nukualofa. The king and queen of Tonga and many of the nobles of that kingdom were in attendance throughout the entire day's activities. Of the 247 missionaries we met with in Tonga, 235 are natives and 12 are from America.

On Thursday, the nineteenth, we proceeded to Samoa, where we broke ground in Apia for a temple in those lovely islands. Several thousand Saints sat out in the open during a heavy tropical rainstorm during the entire service. Present for this occasion were the Chief of State of Western Samoa, the Prime Minister, and several members of Parliament.

Early the next morning we had one of the loveliest experiences of our lives, as we visited the Church School of Western Samoa. As we entered the gymnasium, the largest building on the campus, we saw seventeen hundred children sitting cross-legged on the gymnasium floor, crowded in as tightly as little sardines in a can. They ranged from small four- and five-year-old kindergarten children in the front to teen-aged high-school youngsters in the back of the hall. What a beautiful, thrilling sight they were as they sang "I Am a Child of God"! They were all dressed in their school uniforms in colors of blue and gold. With their beautiful dark hair and big brown eyes, they presented a picture of youth and beauty that was breathtaking. The tears came to our eyes quickly and without shame. At the close of my remarks, I announced to the students that in honor of the occasion I was declaring a holiday for the rest of the day. Judging by the

sound of the applause, I think I may have become an instant hero—at least for that day. After the brief meeting, we left the hall with the haunting strains of the Samoan farewell song, "Tofa My Faleni," ringing in our ears and warming our hearts.

Hawaii, Southern States, Caribbean

We flew to Hawaii that night, arriving the morning of Saturday, February 21. During the day we visited the BYU-Hawaii campus and the Polynesian Cultural Center. Sunday morning we attended the Oahu Stake conference, and then, in company with Elders Gordon B. Hinckley, Thomas S. Monson, and Boyd K. Packer, we held a meeting in the Hawaii Temple. We then toured the newly remodeled visitors' center and there met with the missionaries. On Monday, February 23, 1981, we returned to Church headquarters.

After four days at home and the office, Sister Kimball and I left on Saturday, February 28, for Florida for a week-long series of meetings with the Saints and some business leaders. On Saturday, March 7, we broke ground for the new temple in Atlanta, Georgia. Ten thousand were present for this occasion, including the governor of Georgia and his wife, several legislators, and U.S. senators Jake Garn and Paula Hawkins. Immediately following that service, we flew to San Juan, Puerto Rico. The next morning, Sunday, March 8, we held a meeting with over twenty-six hundred members of the stake and mission on that island. We next visited the Dominican Republic and held a meeting at Santo Domingo on Monday. Two years ago there were only two families of members on that island, but at our meeting we had over fifteen hundred members present. We left Santo Domingo on Tuesday, March 10, and

that night dedicated a new visitors' center on the Church's Deseret Ranch near Orlando, Florida.

Washington, D.C.

On Thursday, we visited the Washington, D.C., Visitors' Center and then met with the Washington Temple presidency and set apart several sealers. The next morning, Friday, March 13, in company with Elder Gordon B. Hinckley, we visited with President Ronald Reagan in the Oval Office of the White House. We presented to him his genealogy on his mother's side. We then met with Mrs. Reagan. Both were very warm and gracious and very appreciative of the genealogical record.

Sister Kimball and I then traveled directly to Arizona, where on Saturday we attended the funeral of my sister, Alice Nelson, who had passed away during our absence. On Sunday, March 15, we returned home to prepare for this general conference.

Love and greetings

This has been a busy but enjoyable and fruitful six months, during which we have traveled some fifty thousand miles by air. We are grateful to the Lord as he has blessed us,

and we have observed the vitality and progress of the Church in many parts of the world. Wherever we have gone, we have been thrilled and humbled by the love and devotion of the members of the Church.

As we begin this conference this morning, I bring you love and greetings from the Saints and missionaries in the Orient, the South Pacific, and the Caribbean. I add my own love and greetings and leave my blessings with you.

I know that God lives and that His Son, Jesus Christ, lives. He is our Savior and our Redeemer and our Mediator with the Father. May He bless us all during this great conference, I humbly pray, in the name of Jesus Christ, amen.

Following President Kimball's address, the Choir sang "Jesus, Once of Humble Birth" without announcement.

President Romney

We have just heard from President Spencer W. Kimball, followed by the Tabernacle Choir singing "Jesus, Once of Humble Birth."

We shall now hear from Elder James E. Faust, a member of the Council of the Twelve Apostles.

Elder James E. Faust

"We thank thee, O God, for a prophet to guide us in these latter days."

This morning I desire to say something which hopefully might give some help and perhaps another focus to the minds of young people. I have never felt more keenly the need for both the aid of the divine Spirit and the understanding of those who hear. I humbly pray that I might not be misunderstood.

Vision of Jesus and the Twelve

I should like to begin by relating a marvelous vision Joseph Smith the Prophet had concerning the Twelve Apostles in his day, which has profound significance for me. Heber C. Kimball recorded, "The following vision was manifested to him [Joseph Smith] as near as I can recollect:

"He saw the Twelve going forth, and they appeared to be in a

far distant land. After some time they unexpectedly met together, apparently in great tribulation, their clothes all ragged, and their knees and feet sore. They formed into a circle, and all stood with their eyes fixed upon the ground. The Savior appeared and stood in their midst and wept over them, and wanted to show Himself to them, but they did not discover Him." (Orson F. Whitney, *Life of Heber C. Kimball*, 2d ed., Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, p. 93; see also *History of the Church*, 2:381.)

A message that can be inferred from this is that, because the Twelve had suffered so much, had endured so greatly, and had so exhausted themselves in leading the battle of righteousness, they were bowed down and did not look up. Had they only looked up they might have beheld the Lord Jesus, who wanted them to see him, weeping over them, suffering with them, and standing in their midst.

Not many months ago we were in one of the oldest cities on earth. Some of the greatest wonders of the world are there; so are crime, squalor, poverty, and filth. Our kind hosts observed as we were making our way through the teeming masses—past the overloaded donkeys, the filth, the smells—that everything was beautiful in that city if you would raise your sights and only look a foot or more above the ground.

In recent times the price of oil, gold, and other precious minerals has greatly increased. These treasures are all obtained by looking down. They are useful and necessary, but they are tangible riches. What of the treasures that are to be found by raising our vision? What of the intangible riches which come from the pursuit of holiness? Stephen looked upward: "Being full of the Holy Ghost, [he] looked up stedfastly into heaven, and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing on the right hand of God." (Acts 7:55.)

Where are self-respect and personal integrity?

My heart and understanding go out to our young people. They have to cope with a darkness and moral fog as dense as many of us can ever remember. We live in a world where success seems largely measured by possessions. How the possessions may have been acquired often seems immaterial. Honesty, decency, chastity, and holiness are frequently downgraded as being of lesser worth than possessions. Are our young people enticed to look up or down?

The desire for profitable gain and popularity in the entertainment world has unmasked in the most appealing way all of the evils of the human race. The most revolting practices and perversions have been masqueraded and even urged upon our inexperienced young people by some seeking to seductively merchandise the evil side of human behavior. Consciences seem scared with a hot iron; spiritual cells seem closed. Ideals of emptiness and uselessness of life are fostered. Nobility of thought and purpose seems not to be sufficiently taught, encouraged, or valued.

The standard of the common thief, "What can we get away with?" has become the standard for many in the world rather than what our own integrity ought to demand that we do. What has happened to self-respect and personal integrity, which would not permit even entertaining the idea of doing cheap or small things? An example might be our relationship with the financial credit by which the world's commerce is carried on. Often we forget that those who extend credit to us are also extending trust and confidence in us. Our own integrity is involved. I recall my father speaking with profound respect of a man whom father as a lawyer had taken through bankruptcy. Given time, this man paid in

full all of his creditors who had trusted him and extended confidence in him, even though he was legally relieved of paying the debts. Our own integrity is a substantial part of our individual worth.

Building self-esteem

How can Christian belief and morality translate more completely into Christian action? Does our commitment fall short of being a consecration? The doubting Thomas wanted to believe; he believed part way. It is my firm persuasion that building self-esteem sufficiently to forsake all evil requires a consecration to the saving principles and ordinances of the gospel under divine priesthood authority. It must be consecration to simple, basic Christian principles, including honesty to self and others, forgetting of self, integrity of thought and action. The principles of the restored gospel are so plain, so clear, so compassionate, so endowed with beauty, so graced with love unfeigned, as to be imprinted with the indisputable impress of the Savior himself.

There also needs to be a confrontation with and mastery of life's challenges, especially those that come with temptation. Instead of squarely and honestly meeting the problems of life, many negotiate their way through difficulties, rationalizing their departure from the great truths which bring happiness and justifying the leaving of their sacred promises and holy commitments for seemingly logical but fragile and unjustifiable reasons.

I cannot help wondering if we have not fallen short of the mark. Have we been measuring by standards that are too short and unworthy of those in the pursuit of holiness? Have we taken too much comfort in feeling that we have qualified through our attendance at meetings or through minimal involvement in a

conscience-easing effort? Have our guidelines been a ceiling instead of a floor?

Upon returning from living in South America I was struck by the lack of self-esteem revealed in the manner by which so many people now clothe themselves in public. To attract attention or in the name of comfort and informality, many have sunk not only to immodesty but to slovenliness. Against their own self-interest, they present themselves to others in the worst possible way.

In forsaking the great principle of modesty, society has paid a price in the violation of a greater but related principle—that of chastity. The purveyors of the concept of irresponsible sexual relations that degrade and brutalize the participants have grossly masqueraded and completely missed the purpose of these divine gifts.

Measuring faith and virtue

Chastity before marriage and faithfulness after marriage are cardinal ingredients for the full flowering of sacred love between husband and wife. Chastity nurtures and builds feelings of self-worth and indemnifies against the destruction of self-image.

One of the root social problems of our day concerns the lack of self-esteem.

A shallow self-image is not reinforced by always letting others establish our standards and by habitually succumbing to peer pressure. Young people too often depend upon someone else's image rather than their own.

Insecurity and lack of self-esteem may be related to lack of self-respect. Can we respect ourselves when we do things that we do not admire and may even condemn in others? Repenting of transgressions and forsaking of weaknesses represent, however, a great restorative

salve for the strengthening of human worth and dignity.

Since virtue and faith too often do not readily trade in the marketplace, some may feel that they can live by whatever standards their whim or fancy suggest. In a value-free society—free of morals, free of standards—many also live free of feelings of self-worth, self-respect, and dignity. Far too many young people, and older ones, too, fail to realize, as the motto of the city of Nottingham, England, affirms: *Vivet post funera virtus* ("Virtue lives on after death").

In the intellectual approach to human worth, the values of faith in God and virtuous behavior cannot be quantitatively proven or measured, and so faith and virtue are often rejected by many as worthless. This is a route destined to failure because it does not take into account the powerful importance of the subjective things we can know but not measure. For instance, I love my wife and family, and I feel their love for me. You cannot measure how deep our feelings of love are for each other, but that love is very real to us. Pain is also difficult to measure, but it is real. The same is true of faith in God. We can know of his existence without being able to quantitatively measure it. Paul states, "The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God." (Rom. 8:16.)

What are the limits on commitment of the heart of those who pursue holiness? Fortunately, this is a matter for each to decide. We achieve perfection, however, in the doing of many things, and can be perfect in our intent to do all things.

In my opinion, it was not contemplated by the great Creator that man- and womankind are intended to wallow in selfishness and self-gratification. After all, "in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them." (Gen. 1:27.)

"What is man, that thou art mindful of him?" says the Psalmist.

"For thou hast made him a little lower than the angels, and hast crowned him with glory and honour.

"Thou madest him to have dominion over the works of thy hands; thou hast put all things under his feet." (Ps. 8:4-6.)

What is the standard of holiness? The answer comes from the scriptures: "Who is like unto thee, O Lord, . . . glorious in holiness?" (Ex. 15:11.)

Like Stephen, those who pursue holiness see the glory of God. (See Acts 7:55.) The blessings that shall come in the pursuit of holiness were in part described by the Lord:

"Verily, thus saith the Lord: It shall come to pass that every soul who forsaketh his sins and cometh unto me, and calleth on my name, and obeyeth my voice, and keepeth my commandments, shall see my face and know that I am." (D&C 93:1.)

As I began, I referred to the vision of Joseph the Prophet concerning the Twelve Apostles in his time. No one need assume that the Twelve who failed to see the Savior because they stood with their eyes fixed upon the ground had in any way failed in their labors. As a body they continued strong and steadfast in their ministry. Their discouragement was only temporary. Their labors were heroic; their acts were bold and courageous. Joseph the Prophet, at the conclusion of that vision, was privileged to see the completion of the work of the Twelve. Heber C. Kimball records: "He (Joseph) saw until they had accomplished their work, and arrived at the gate of the celestial city; there Father Adam stood and opened the gate to them, and as they entered he embraced them one by one and kissed them. He [Adam] then led them to the throne of God, and then the Savior embraced each one of them and kis-

sed them, and crowned each one of them in the presence of God. . . . The impression this vision left on Brother Joseph's mind was of so acute a nature, that he never could refrain from weeping while rehearsing it." (Whitney, *Life of Heber C. Kimball*, pp. 93-94.)

Dignity of self

The dignity of self is greatly enhanced by looking upward in the search for holiness. Like the giant trees, we should reach up for the light. The most important source of light we can come to know is the gift of the Holy Ghost. It is the source of inner strength and peace.

I have seen human dignity and self-worth expressed eloquently in the lives of the humblest of the humble, in the lives of the poor as well as in the lives of the formally educated and the affluent. The fruits of the search for holiness in their lives have been transparent, expressed through their inner dignity, their feelings of self-respect and personal worth. Shakespeare, speaking through Polonius, reminds us:

*This above all: to thine own self be true,
And it must follow, as the night the day,
Thou canst not then be false to any man.*
(*Hamlet*, act 1, scene 3, lines 78-80.)

Much of our self-respect is built by our own hard work, our thrift, and by trying to be independent as far as possible.

May we all have a feeling of personal worth and dignity born of

the knowledge that each of us is a child of God, and be strengthened by looking upwards in the pursuit of holiness. As we look up may we be worthy to receive the inspiration that comes constantly from God, which inspiration is sacred, real, and often very private.

I have a conviction of these matters from sacred inner whisperings. I know that Jesus lives and is the head of this church, which testimony I leave, in the name of the Savior, Jesus Christ, amen.

President Romney

Elder James E. Faust, a member of the Council of the Twelve Apostles, has just spoken to us.

The Choir and congregation will now join in singing "Israel, Israel, God Is Calling."

The Choir and congregation sang "Israel, Israel, God Is Calling."

President Romney

We welcome those who have just joined us on radio and television. We are gathered in the Tabernacle on Temple Square in Salt Lake City, Utah, in the first session of the 151st Annual General Conference of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.

Elder Jacob de Jager, a member of the First Quorum of the Seventy, will now address us. He will be followed by Elder Boyd K. Packer, a member of the Council of the Twelve Apostles.

Elder Jacob de Jager

My dear brothers and sisters: Thirty-one years ago today, the fourth of April, 1950, I left Holland on a three-year company assignment to Southeast Asia.

Electric lighting in Southeast Asia

This assignment enabled me to make extended trips to various remote islands in that part of the world to assist in the planning and development of rural electrification.

It also gave me a chance to see firsthand after World War II how the people in that part of the world were going through a rapid development.

In their homes simple oil lamps with coconut oil and a wick were replaced by electric lighting. With the coming of electricity to their islands, for many, night turned into day with new possibilities for individual study and recreation after sunset. To make this possible, power stations had to be built. High-voltage power lines and electrical substations had to be installed in order to carry electricity into every home.

I remember the happy looks on the faces and the sparkle in the eyes of the youngsters, but also the tears of gratitude in the eyes of the elderly people, when the mayor of their native village switched on the electric lighting system for the first time. Well-planned festivities followed with music, singing, and dancing from sunset till sunrise the next morning.

There truly was great joy among the people!

Gospel light in Southeast Asia

Twenty-six years later, again on the fourth of April, the Lord called me out of the world into his permanent service; and shortly thereafter, this time as a member of the

First Quorum of the Seventy of the Church, I once more departed for Southeast Asia, but now to spread another light—the light of the gospel. And so, for numerous people, another remarkable change came into their lives.

The light to be spread was carried by a group of dedicated young men and women who had taken upon themselves to bring the light of the gospel into every home that they were allowed to enter. Their power stations were the mission headquarters in Southeast Asia, and their power lines were the lines of priesthood authority, without which the system could never function.

These missionaries also witnessed joy and gratitude when the first glimpses of eternal light were brought into the lives of their converts and when the new members learned to sing in their own language during family home evening, "There is beauty all around, when there's love at home." ("There Is Beauty All Around," *Hymns*, no. 169.)

Every time a new mission is opened up, branches of the Church are established, or stakes of Zion are organized, bright lights start to shine forth, bringing to mind the words of the hymn:

The morning breaks; the shadows flee;

Lo, Zion's standard is unfurled!

The dawning of a brighter day

Majestic rises on the world.

("The Morning Breaks; the Shadows Flee," *Hymns*, no. 269.)

Sacred obligation

Brothers and sisters, is this spreading of the light to every nation not a miracle?

Is this charge to reach out to every household in order to bring

light, love, and happiness to our fellowmen not a sacred obligation? Especially when we know that the Savior said, "Verily I say unto you all: Arise and shine forth, that thy light may be a standard for the nations." (D&C 115:5.)

Who are "you all" now, on this very day, the fourth of April, 1981?

As far as I can determine from the missionary recommendations that are daily received in the Missionary Department, the majority are still the nineteen-year-old elders and the twenty-one-year-old sisters who, by a long-established tradition, come forward to serve as full-time missionaries.

There are also faithful older sisters, who make such outstanding missionaries wherever they are called to serve.

And finally, there are a limited number of married couples of retirement age. I say a limited number because there are many, many more healthy couples between the ages of sixty and seventy who could happily serve in the mission field.

Increasing need for missionary couples

As the work continues to expand into the many nations of the earth, there will be an increasing need for couples to serve as full-time missionaries. In addition to their basic assignment of teaching the gospel, they may be assigned to perform additional functions.

For instance, in missions where qualified leadership is not yet available, missionary couples may serve as leadership trainers.

We also have among the senior members of the Church retired office workers, bookkeepers, and even certified accountants. Couples with these qualifications may serve in the mission offices as mission secretaries, recorders, or financial secretaries. Moreover, there are among the

mature couples those who have acquired a great expertise in genealogy and they can use their knowledge and experience, when specifically assigned to do so, to teach genealogical skills to members in wards and branches.

Furthermore, there are also possibilities for giving faithful service to build the kingdom by teaching the gospel in a visitors' center or in opening up the work in international areas outside the boundaries of existing missions.

Come forward and ask for mission call

However, there is still the mistaken idea among many couples that their missionary work would be proselyting only. I hope by what I have just said that they now have a better insight and will reconsider the possibility of service, especially when they hear that, contrary to the established policy for other callings in the kingdom, they can come forward and express their desire to go on a six-, twelve-, or eighteen-month mission.

But many say, "Elder de Jager, it is too hard to leave our grandchildren." Apparently, leaving their own children for a while seems no problem, but to leave little Billy and darling little Susie, oh, seems really difficult to them.

I have heard of truly great experiences of couples in the mission field.

Brother and Sister Ralph Lambert served their eighteen months' mission in the Oklahoma Tulsa Mission. While serving in a small branch they had a sister and her teenage son coming to church every Sunday. Although the father in this family was a member of record, he never came along.

Before his retirement in Oklahoma, he had lived in Utah, and as a young deacon he was so shy that he

did not attend church because he was afraid to be asked to pray or to carry out some other assignment.

From time to time he met young missionaries who talked to him about the Church, but they were never able to bring him back into activity. However, Brother and Sister Lambert, being of the same age and having great maturity, were able to develop a warm relationship with him.

He started coming to church with his wife and son, and he was never pressured to do anything he did not feel like doing. After a while, he started to ask how much money was expected as a contribution to the branch budget. When this was explained to him in a loving way, he made his first contribution.

About a month later, when fast Sunday was approaching, he asked what the present procedure was for paying tithing. It was explained to him that it hadn't changed in the fifty years since he had lived in Utah! He then started paying this voluntary contribution to the kingdom.

Shortly thereafter, he said that he would accept any call that would be extended to him in that small branch. He was ordained a priest, and this enabled him to ordain his youngest son a priest in the Aaronic Priesthood.

He later became a counselor in the branch presidency, and last year he was ordained an elder and his whole family was sealed together in the Salt Lake Temple.

Blessing of missionary work

I testify that Brother and Sister Lambert, with thousands of faithful couples who have served in the past and those who are serving now, will be greatly blessed by our Heavenly Father and that they have gained a sound understanding of the true meaning of the scripture:

"And if it so be that you should labor all your days in crying repen-

tance unto this people, and bring, save it be one soul unto me, how great shall be your joy with him in the kingdom of my Father!" (D&C 18:15.)

Finally, I would like to share with you one more interesting experience, which Brother and Sister Edwin Q. Cannon, Jr., had on their mission in West Africa.

The story concerns an outstanding black Latter-day Saint family by the name of Sampson-Davis, who reside in Accra, Ghana.

In 1963 Brother Sampson-Davis graduated with a degree in electronics from Oxford University in England and was hired by the Philips Electronics Company in Eindhoven, Holland. Sister Sampson-Davis came over from Africa to join her husband in that Dutch town, and one day she met the Mormon missionaries, received a Book of Mormon, and had the first missionary discussion in the boarding house where she was living.

I feel somewhat embarrassed, however, to tell you that the Dutch landlady with whom Sister Sampson-Davis boarded told her in no uncertain terms to have no further contact with those Mormons.

The Sampson-Davis family eventually went back to Ghana, and fifteen years later, in 1978, Sister Sampson-Davis came in contact with the Church again and faithfully started to attend the Sunday meetings. The family was taught the missionary discussions, gained a strong testimony; and Brother Ted Cannon baptized the mother, two sons, and a daughter in a swimming pool in Accra.

The oldest boy, Crosby Sampson-Davis, started to prepare himself for a mission, which resulted in his mission call earlier this year. Two weeks ago Elder Sampson-Davis left the Missionary Training Center to serve in the England Manchester Mission. Interestingly enough, the father joined the Church

one month before his son left for his mission. So the whole family is now united in the faith!

Brother and Sister Cannon really have seen the fruits of their labors, and they have choice memories of the time they spent with our Heavenly Father's children in Africa.

I share the experiences of these two couples with you to let you feel the importance of missionary service for senior couples and the blessings that come to all who are engaged in the work of the Master.

I testify, as a convert to the Church, that no greater joy can come to men than being involved in carrying the gospel to all nations, kin-

dreds, tongues, and people.

I humbly pray that the missionary spirit will be with us all in the time ahead and that we may be an instrument in the hand of the Lord to build his kingdom here on earth prior to his glorious return, and do so in the name of Jesus Christ, amen.

President Romney

Elder Jacob de Jager, a member of the First Quorum of the Seventy, has just spoken to us.

Elder Boyd K. Packer, a member of the Council of the Twelve Apostles, will now address us.

Elder Boyd K. Packer

The prophet Jacob foretold the destruction of a people because they were blind to ordinary things, "which blindness," he said, "came by looking beyond the mark." (Jacob 4:14.)

We often seek for things we cannot seem to find when they are within easy reach—ordinary, obvious things.

I wish to talk about an ordinary word. I have tried for months—really tried—to find some way to hold this word up in such a way that you would be very impressed with what it means.

Marriage

The word is *marriage*.

I have wished that I could set before you a finely carved chest, placing it where the light is just right. I would carefully unlatch it and reverently uncover the word—*marriage*.

Perhaps then you would see that it is priceless!

I cannot show it to you that way, so I will do the best I can using other ordinary words.

It is my purpose to endorse and to favor, to encourage and defend marriage.

Many regard it nowadays as being, at best, semiprecious, and by some it is thought to be worth nothing at all.

I have seen and heard, as you have seen and heard, the signals all about us, carefully orchestrated to convince us that marriage is out of date and in the way.

Counterfeit of marriage

There is a practice, now quite prevalent, for unmarried couples to live together, a counterfeit of marriage. They suppose that they shall have all that marriage can offer without the obligations connected with it. They are wrong!

However much they hope to find in a relationship of that kind, they will lose more. Living together without marriage destroys something inside all who participate. Virtue, self-esteem, and refinement of character wither away.

Claiming that it will not happen does not prevent the loss; and these virtues, once lost, are not easily reclaimed.

To suppose that one day they may nonchalantly change their habits and immediately claim all that might have been theirs had they not made a mockery of marriage is to suppose something that will not be.

One day, when they come to themselves, they will reap disappointment.

One cannot degrade marriage without tarnishing other words as well, such words as *boy, girl, manhood, womanhood, husband, wife, father, mother, baby, children, family, home*.

Such words as *unselfishness* and *sacrifice* will then be tossed aside. Then self-respect will fade and love itself will not want to stay.

If you have been tempted to enter such a relationship or if you now live with another without marriage, leave! Withdraw from it! Run away from it! Do not continue with it! Or, if you can, make a marriage out of it.

Marriage is sacred

Even a rickety marriage will serve good purpose as long as two people struggle to keep it from falling down around them.

And now a word of warning. One who destroys a marriage takes upon himself a very great responsibility indeed. Marriage is sacred!

To willfully destroy a marriage, either your own or that of another couple, is to offend our God. Such a thing will not be lightly considered in the judgments of the Almighty and in the eternal scheme of things will not easily be forgiven.

Do not threaten nor break up a marriage. Do not translate some disenchantment with your own marriage partner or an attraction for someone

else into justification for any conduct that would destroy a marriage.

This monumental transgression frequently places heavy burdens upon little children. They do not understand the selfish yearnings of unhappy adults who are willing to buy their own satisfaction at the expense of the innocent.

God Himself decreed that the physical expression of love, that union of male and female which has power to generate life, is authorized only in marriage.

Marriage is the shelter where families are created. That society which puts low value on marriage sows the wind and, in time, will reap the whirlwind—and thereafter, unless they repent, bring upon themselves a holocaust!

Trouble attracts attention

Some think that every marriage must expect to end in unhappiness and divorce, with the hopes and dreams predestined to end in a broken, sad wreck of things.

Some marriages do bend, and some will break, but we must not, because of this, lose faith in marriage nor become afraid of it.

Broken marriages are not typical.

Remember that trouble attracts attention! We travel the highway with thousands of cars moving in either direction without paying much attention to any of them. But should an accident occur, we notice immediately.

If it happens again, we get the false impression that no one can go safely down the road.

One accident may make the front page, while a hundred million cars that safely pass are not regarded as worth mentioning.

Writers think that a happy, stable marriage does not have the dramatic appeal, the conflict worth

featuring in a book or a play or a film. Therefore, we constantly hear about the ruined ones and we lose our perspective.

I believe in marriage. I believe it to be the ideal pattern for human living. I know it to be ordained of God. The restraints relating to it were designed to protect our happiness.

Keep faith in marriage

I do not know of any better time in all of the history of the world for a young couple who are of age and prepared and who are in love to think of marriage. There is no better time because it is *your* time.

I know that these are very troubled times. Troubles like we have now are very hard on marriages.

Do not lose faith in marriage. Not even if you have been through the unhappiness of a divorce and are surrounded with pieces of a marriage that has fallen apart.

If you have honored your vows and your partner did not do so, remember God is watching over us. One day, after all of the tomorrows have passed, there will be recompense. Those who have been moral and faithful to their covenants will be happy and those who have not will be otherwise.

Some marriages have broken up in spite of all that one partner could do to hold the marriage together. While there may be faults on both sides, I do not condemn the innocent one who suffers in spite of all that was desired and done to save the marriage.

And to you I say, do not lose faith in marriage itself. Do not let your disappointment leave you bitter or cynical or justify any conduct that is unworthy.

If you have had no opportunity for marriage or if you have lost your companion in death, keep your faith in marriage.

Some years ago an associate of mine lost his beloved wife. She died after a lingering illness, and he watched in helpless agony as the doctors withdrew all hope.

One day near the end she told him that when she was gone she wanted him to marry again and he was not to wait too long a time. He protested! The children were nearly grown and he would go the rest of the way alone.

She turned away and wept and said, "Have I been such a failure that after all our years together you would rather go unmarried? Have I been such a failure?"

In due time there came another, and their life together has reaffirmed his faith in marriage. And I have the feeling that his first beloved wife is deeply grateful to the second one, who filled the place that she could not keep.

Joys and tests of marriage

Marriage is yet safe, with all its sweet fulfillment, with all its joy and love. In marriage all of the worthy yearnings of the human soul, all that is physical and emotional and spiritual, can be fulfilled.

Marriage is not without trials of many kinds. These tests forge virtue and strength. The tempering that comes in marriage and family life produces men and women who will someday be exalted.

God has ordained that life should have its beginning within the protecting shelter of marriage, conceived in a consummate expression of love and nurtured and fostered with that deeper love which is accompanied always by sacrifice.

Marriage offers fulfillment all the way through life—in youth and young love, the wedding and on the honeymoon, with the coming of little children and the nurturing of them. Then come the golden years when

young ones leave the nest to build one of their own. The cycle then repeats itself, as God has decreed it should.

Eternal love, eternal marriage, eternal increase

There is another dimension to marriage that we know of in the Church. It came by revelation. This glorious, supernal truth teaches us that marriage is meant to be eternal.

There are covenants we can make if we are willing, and bounds we can seal if we are worthy, that will keep marriage safe and intact beyond the veil of death.

The Lord has declared, "For behold, this is my work and my glory—to bring to pass the immortality and eternal life of man." (Moses 1:39.)

The ultimate end of all activity in the Church is that a man and his wife and their children can be happy at home and that the family can continue through eternity. All Christian doctrine is formulated to protect the individual, the home, and the family.

These lines express something of the place of marriage in the eternal progress of man:

*We have within a burning flame,
A light to kindle lights,
The sacred fire of life itself,
Which if misused ignites
A smold'ring, suffocating cloud
Of sorrow and distress.
When used by law this power brings
forth
A life, a family, happiness.*

*Temptors from the darkest realm
Seek to pervert this power
In acts of wickedness and waste
Until there comes the hour
Of judgment and of recompense,
When bitter tears are shed
O'er power once held to foster life
That now is gone and dead.*

*I know this power to be a key,
A very key to God's own plan
Which brings to pass eternal life
And immortality for man.
And marriage is the crucible
Where elements of life combine,
Where mortal temples are conceived
Within that plan divine.*

*Then spirit offspring of our God
Can come through mortal birth
To have a choice, to face the test—
The purpose of our stay on earth.
Here good and evil stand alike
Before decision's sovereign nod.
Those who elect the righteous path
Will part the veil, return to God.*

*A gift from God, the plan provides
That mortal beings in humble strait
Be given power, supernal power,
To share their love and help create
A living child, a living soul,
Image of man, and of Deity.
How we regard this sacred gift
Will fix our course, our destiny!*

Eternal love, eternal marriage, eternal increase! This ideal, which is new to many, when thoughtfully considered, can keep a marriage strong and safe. No relationship has more potential to exalt a man and a woman than the marriage covenant. No obligation in society or in the Church supersedes it in importance.

I thank God for marriage. I thank God for temples. I thank God for the glorious sealing power, that power which transcends all that we have been given, through which our marriages may become eternal. May we be worthy of this sacred gift, I pray in the name of Jesus Christ, amen.

Following Elder Packer's talk, the Choir sang "More Holiness Give Me" without announcement.

President Romney

The Tabernacle Choir has just sung "More Holiness Give Me."

President Romney speaks without announcement.

President Marion G. Romney

Restoration of Israel

My beloved brethren and sisters, I am sure we all realize that we are living in the dispensation of the fulness of times, which will culminate in the second coming of the Savior.

Among the predicted signs of his second coming was the restoration of the Church of Jesus Christ, to the fulfillment of which we are all witnesses; another is to be the establishment of Zion in America; and a third is the prediction that the children of Israel will be restored to the lands of their inheritance.

Much interest in the fulfillment of this third prediction has been aroused recently by the dedication of the Orson Hyde Memorial Gardens in Jerusalem and the diplomatic maneuvering of the involved nations over the Holy Land. Against this background, it has been interesting to me, and I believe it will be interesting and informative to all of us, to consider what is written in the Book of Mormon concerning the restoration of the children of Israel to the lands of their inheritance and the second coming of the Savior.

Soon after Lehi's colony arrived in the promised land (about 580 B.C.), Nephi, having written concerning Christ's then future birth, ministry, and crucifixion, continued:

"And as for those who are at Jerusalem, saith the prophet, they shall be scourged by all people, because they crucify the God of Israel, and turn their hearts aside, rejecting signs and wonders, and the power and glory of the God of Israel.

"And because they turn their

hearts aside, saith the prophet, and have despised the Holy One of Israel, they shall wander in the flesh, and perish, and become a hiss and a byword, and be hated among all nations.

"Nevertheless, when that day cometh, saith the prophet, that they no more turn aside their hearts against the Holy One of Israel, then will he remember the covenants which he made to their fathers.

"Yea, then will he remember the isles of the sea; yea, and all the people who are of the house of Israel, will I gather in, saith the Lord, according to the words of the prophet Zenos, from the four quarters of the earth." (1 Ne. 19:13-16.)

Nephi had earlier—before they crossed the ocean—spoken unto his brothers "concerning the restoration of the Jews in the latter days.

"And I did rehearse unto them," he said, "the words of Isaiah, who spake concerning the restoration of the Jews, or of the house of Israel; and after they were restored they should no more be confounded, neither should they be scattered again." (1 Ne. 15:19-20.)

Prophecies of gathering

Some twenty-five years later, Nephi's brother Jacob, speaking concerning the inhabitants of Jerusalem, said "that the Lord . . . should manifest himself unto them in the flesh; and after he should manifest himself they should scourge him and crucify him, according to the words of the angel who spake it unto me.

"And after they have hardened their hearts and stiffened their necks against the Holy One of Israel, behold, the judgments of the Holy One of Israel shall come upon them. And the day cometh that they shall be smitten and afflicted.

"Wherefore, after they are driven to and fro, for thus saith the angel, many shall be afflicted in the flesh, and shall not be suffered to perish, because of the prayers of the faithful; they shall be scattered, and smitten, and hated; nevertheless, the Lord will be merciful unto them, that when they shall come to the knowledge of their Redeemer, they shall be gathered together again to the lands of their inheritance." (2 Ne. 6:9-11.)

Later Jacob, the brother of Nephi, added:

"And now, my beloved brethren, I have read these things that ye might know concerning the covenants of the Lord that he has covenanted with all the house of Israel—

"That he has spoken unto the Jews, by the mouth of his holy prophets, even from the beginning down, from generation to generation, until the time comes that they shall be restored to the true church and fold of God; when they shall be gathered home to the lands of their inheritance, and shall be established in all their lands of promise." (2 Ne. 9:1-2.)

"But behold, thus saith the Lord God: When the day cometh that they shall believe in me, that I am Christ, then have I covenanted with their fathers that they shall be restored in the flesh, upon the earth, unto the lands of their inheritance.

"And it shall come to pass that they shall be gathered in from their long dispersion, from the isles of the sea, and from the four parts of the earth; and the nations of the Gentiles shall be great in the eyes of me, saith God, in carrying them forth to the lands of their inheritance." (2 Ne. 10:7-8.)

Near the end of his life, Nephi, foretelling the future history of the Jews, said that, following the crucifixion and resurrection of Jesus, "the Jews shall be scattered among all nations; yea, and also Babylon shall be destroyed; wherefore, the Jews shall be scattered by other nations. [It was Babylon that scattered the Jews, of course, before the birth of Christ.]

"And after they have been scattered, and the Lord God hath scourged them by other nations for the space of many generations, yea, even down from generation to generation until they shall be persuaded to believe in Christ, the Son of God, and the atonement, which is infinite for all mankind—and when that day shall come that they shall believe in Christ, and worship the Father in his name, with pure hearts and clean hands, and look not forward any more for another Messiah, then, at that time, the day will come that it must needs be expedient that they should believe these things.

"And the Lord will set his hand again the second time to restore his people from their lost and fallen state." (2 Ne. 25:15-17.)

"I will remember the covenant"

In the twentieth chapter of 3 Nephi, the resurrected Jesus—speaking of our day when the gospel would be restored among the Gentiles as it has now been—said: "When they [the Gentiles] shall have received the fulness of my gospel, then if they shall harden their hearts against me . . .

"I will remember the covenant which I have made with my people; and I have covenanted with them that I would gather them together in mine own due time, that I would give unto them again the land of their fathers for their inheritance, which is the land of Jerusalem, which is the promised land unto them forever, saith the Father.

"And it shall come to pass that the time cometh, when the fulness of my gospel shall be preached unto them;

"And they shall believe in me, that I am Jesus Christ, the Son of God, and shall pray unto the Father in my name.

"Then shall their watchmen lift up their voice, and with the voice together shall they sing; for they shall see eye to eye.

"Then will the Father gather them together again, and give unto them Jerusalem for the land of their inheritance.

"Then shall they break forth into joy—Sing together, ye waste places of Jerusalem; for the Father hath comforted his people, he hath redeemed Jerusalem. . . .

"Verily, verily, I say unto you, all these things shall surely come, even as the Father hath commanded me. Then shall this covenant which the Father hath covenanted with his people be fulfilled; and then shall Jerusalem be inhabited again with my people, and it shall be the land of their inheritance." (3 Ne. 20:28-34, 46.)

"Verily I say unto you," said the Savior to the Nephites, "I give unto you a sign, that ye may know the time when these things shall be about to take place. . . .

"... at that day, even when this gospel shall be preached among the remnant of this people. Verily I say unto you, at that day shall the work of the Father commence among all the dispersed of my people, yea, even the tribes which have been lost, which the Father hath led away out of Jerusalem.

"Yea, the work shall commence among all the dispersed of my people, with the Father, to prepare the way whereby they may come unto me, that they may call on the Father in my name.

"Yea, and then shall the work commence, with the Father, among all nations, in preparing the way

whereby his people may be gathered home to the land of their inheritance." (3 Ne. 21:1, 26-28.)

Signal of Israel's acceptance of Christ

Mormon, finishing his abridged account of Christ's ministry among the Nephites, said:

"And now behold, I say unto you that when the Lord shall see fit, in his wisdom, that these sayings shall come unto the Gentiles according to his word, then ye may know that the covenant which the Father hath made with the children of Israel, concerning their restoration to the lands of their inheritance, is already beginning to be fulfilled.

"And ye may know that the words of the Lord, which have been spoken by the holy prophets, shall all be fulfilled; and ye need not say that the Lord delays his coming unto the children of Israel.

"And ye need not imagine in your hearts that the words which have been spoken are vain, for behold, the Lord will remember his covenant which he hath made unto his people of the house of Israel. . . .

"Yea, and ye need not any longer hiss, nor spurn, nor make game of the Jews, nor any of the remnant of the house of Israel; for behold, the Lord remembereth his covenant unto them, and he will do unto them according to that which he hath sworn." (3 Ne. 29:1-3, 8.)

Concluding the record which Moroni would deposit in the Hill Cumorah, which Joseph Smith would bring forth 1,400 years later, Mormon wrote:

"Now these things are written unto the remnant of the house of Jacob; . . . and they are to be hid up unto the Lord that they may come forth in his own due time. . . .

"And behold, they shall go unto

the unbelieving of the Jews; and for this intent shall they go—that they may be persuaded that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of the living God; that the Father may bring about, through his most Beloved, his great and eternal purpose, in restoring the Jews, or all the house of Israel, to the land of their inheritance, which the Lord their God hath given them, unto the fulfilling of his covenant.” (Morm. 5:12, 14.)

These predictions by the Book of Mormon prophets make it perfectly clear that the restoration of the house of Israel to the lands of their inheritance will signal their acceptance of Jesus Christ as their Redeemer, to which I testify, in the name of Jesus Christ, amen.

The Choir sang “All Glory, Laud and Honor” without announcement.

President Romney

The Tabernacle Choir has just sung “All Glory, Laud and Honor.”

We are grateful to the managers and operators of the many television and radio stations for offering their facilities as a public service to bring the proceedings of this conference to a large audience throughout many areas of the world.

We shall conclude this session of the conference with the Tabernacle Choir singing “Most Holy Spirit.”

Following the singing, the benediction will be pronounced by Elder W. Grant Bangerter, a member of the First Quorum of the Seventy. This conference will then be adjourned until two o’clock this afternoon.

The Choir sang “Most Holy Spirit.”

Elder W. Grant Bangerter pronounced the benediction.

FIRST DAY AFTERNOON MEETING

SECOND SESSION

The second session of the 151st Annual General Conference began at 2:00 P.M. on Saturday, April 4, 1981. President Spencer W. Kimball presided at and conducted this session.

Music for this session was provided by the combined institute choir from Salt Lake, Weber, and Logan institutes of religion directed by Paul A. Hanks with Roy M. Darley at the organ.

At the beginning of the meeting, President Kimball made the following remarks:

President Spencer W. Kimball

We welcome all assembled in the Salt Lake Tabernacle on Temple Square in this, the second session of the 151st Annual General Conference of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.

We also welcome the many members and friends of the Church tuned to these proceedings by radio, television, and direct wire. There is an overflow congregation in the Salt Palace where Elders Robert L. Simpson and William R. Bradford are presiding.

We are pleased to acknowledge especially our guests who are present this afternoon, along with general and local Church leaders and members from many parts of the world.

We express our appreciation to the owners and operators of many radio and television stations for their cooperation in making these proceedings available to members and friends of the Church in many countries.

The music for this session will be provided by a combined institute choir from Salt Lake, Weber, and Logan institutes of religion. This choir is under the direction of Paul A. Hanks with Roy Darley at the organ.

The choir will begin this service by singing "True to the Faith." The

invocation will be offered by Elder Marion D. Hanks, a member of the First Quorum of the Seventy.

The choir sang "True to the Faith."

The invocation was given by Elder Marion D. Hanks.

President Kimball

Elder Wilford G. Edling will now read the auditor's report. Afterward Elder Francis M. Gibbons will present the statistical report of the Church for the year 1980.

Auditor's Report 1980

Elder Wilford G. Edling

We have reviewed the annual financial report of the Church as of December 31, 1980, and the operations for the year then ended. The financial statements and operations reviewed by the committee include the general funds of the Church and of other controlled organizations, the accounts of which are maintained by the Financial Department of the Church. We have also examined the budgeting, accounting, and auditing procedures employed, and the manner in which funds are received and expenditures are controlled. We determined that expenditures of general Church funds were authorized by the First Presidency and by budgetary procedures. The budget is authorized by the Council on Disposition of the Tithes, comprised of the First Presidency, the Council of the Twelve, and the Presiding Bishopric. The Budget and Appropriations Committee, in weekly meetings, administers the expenditure of funds under the budget.

Modern accounting technology and equipment are employed by the Financial Department and other departments in keeping abreast of rapid Church expansion and changing methods of electronic data processing. The committee and the Law Department are conjointly giving continuous attention to matters relating to taxation of churches by the federal government, the states, and foreign governments.

The Auditing Department, which is independent of all other departments, functions in the three-fold capacity of performing financial audits, operational audits, and audits of the computer systems employed by the Church. These services are conducted on a continuous basis and include all Church departments, other Church-controlled organizations (the accounts of which are maintained in the Financial Department), and worldwide operations, including missions, financial centers, and departmental activities conducted in foreign countries. The extent and scope of the Auditing Department in safe-

guarding the resources of the Church are increasing commensurate with the growth and the widening activities of the Church. The audit of local funds of wards and stakes is assigned to stake auditors. Incorporated businesses owned or controlled by the Church, for which accounts are not maintained in the Financial Department, are audited by professional auditing firms or by governmental regulatory agencies.

Based on our review of the annual financial report and other accounting data, and our study of the accounting and auditing methods by which financial operations are controlled, together with continuing dis-

cussions with personnel of the Financial, Auditing, and Law departments, we are of the opinion that the general funds of the Church received and expended during the year 1980 have been properly accounted for in accordance with established procedures which are outlined herein.

Respectfully submitted,
Church Audit
Committee

Wilford G. Edling
David M. Kennedy
Warren E. Pugh
Merrill J. Bateman
Ted E. Davis

Statistical Report 1980

Elder Francis M. Gibbons

For the information of the members of the Church, the First Presidency has issued the following statistical report concerning the growth and status of the Church as of December 31, 1980. (Membership figures are estimates based on 1980 reports available prior to conference.)

Church Units

Number of stakes of Zion	1,218
Number of full-time missions.....	188
Number of wards.....	7,868
Number of independent branches in stakes	2,456
Number of mission branches..	2,267
(These statistics reflect an increase of 1,105 wards and branches during 1980.)	
Number of countries with organized wards or branches	83

Church Membership

Total membership reported by stakes, missions, and Church offices at the close of 1980	4,638,000
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Church Growth during 1980

Children blessed	103,000
Children of record baptized	65,000
Converts baptized	211,000
(This convert baptism figure is an estimate based on 1980 reports received at Church headquarters prior to conference.)	

Social Statistics

Birthrate per thousand	28.2
Number of persons married per thousand	12.2
Death rate per thousand	3.9

Genealogical Society

Names cleared in 1980 for temple endowments.....	5,414,600
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Temples

Numbers of endowments performed during 1980:	
For the living	52,000
For the dead	3,962,000
Temples in operation	19
Temples planned or under construction	8
(There were 89,100 more endowments done in 1980 than in 1979.)	

Priesthood

Deacons	156,000
Teachers	122,000
Priests	236,000
Elders	382,000
Seventies	30,000
High priests	157,000
(An estimated increase of 42,000 priesthood members during 1980)	
Full-time missionaries	29,953

Church School System

Total enrollment during 1979-80 school year:	
Seminaries and Institutes including special programs	309,000
Church schools, colleges, and continuing education	75,000

Welfare Services

Persons assisted with cash or commodities	160,600
Persons assisted by LDS Social Services	51,600
Persons placed in gainful employment	26,400
Man-days of labor donated to welfare services	527,900
Commodities distributed from storehouses in pounds	35,441,200

**Prominent Members Who Passed
Away during the Year**

Elder William H. Bennett,
emeritus member of the First Quorum

of the Seventy; William Pakimana Taurima, president of the Gisborne New Zealand Stake; Thomas Lee Chappell, president of the Loa Utah Stake; Donald Leon Hansen, president of the San Bernardino California East Stake; Clara Alberta Wright Moyle, widow of Henry D. Moyle, former First Counselor in the First Presidency; Betsy Hollings Richards, widow of George F. Richards, former President of the Quorum of the Twelve; Edgar B. Brossard, former member of the United States Tariff Commission for 36 years; Leona Holbrook, president of the American Association for Health, Physical Education, and Recreation, former member of the U.S. Olympic Committee, and participant in the International Olympic Academy; Junius M. Jackson, former president of the Church Genealogical Society; Pearl B. Johnson, secretary to members of the First Presidency or Quorum of the Twelve for over forty years and former member of the YWMA General Board.

President Kimball

Elder Gordon B. Hinckley, a member of the Council of the Twelve Apostles, will be the first speaker. Elder Marvin J. Ashton, also a member of the Council of the Twelve Apostles, will follow.

Elder Gordon B. Hinckley

In behalf of all, I should like to welcome Brother Angel Abrea, a great and faithful and devoted leader of the Church for many years in Argentina, whose influence has been felt not only there but throughout South America.

**Purported blessing given to Joseph
Smith III**

I think I should like to say a

few words this afternoon about the recently discovered transcript of a blessing, reported to have been given January 17, 1844, by Joseph Smith to his eleven-year-old son. This has received much attention in the media of late. The document is evidently in the handwriting of Thomas Bullock, who served as clerk to the Prophet.

Our Historical Department secured it in pursuit of their practice of obtaining artifacts of many kinds re-

lated to our early history. We determined that we would give full publicity to the discovery, even though we were confident that critics, knowing little of the factual history of the Church, would seize upon it as suggesting a flaw in our line of authority.

Furthermore, and this is of significant importance, we recognized the wording of the document as a father's blessing, having great sentimental value for the Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints, whose presidents have been lineal descendants of Joseph Smith. The First Presidency and the Council of the Twelve determined to offer it to the Reorganized Church.

Officers of that church responded with appreciation, and indicated that they would accept the document only by giving us in return another valuable artifact. An exchange was made on March 19th last.

I do not wish to open old discussions, but for those who may feel that the document casts a cloud on the principle of transfer of authority through the Council of the Twelve Apostles, I desire to review briefly a few facts concerning the document and the history of the period to which it is related, and then conclude with some observations that arise out of the circumstances.

First, it should be said that the document is a transcript of a blessing. It is not a record of ordination to an office. As a matter of fact, the recipient of the blessing, Joseph Smith III, himself testified in 1893, in the U.S. Circuit Court in Kansas City: "I did not state that I was ordained by my father: I did not make that statement. I was not ordained by my father as his successor: according to my understanding of the word *ordain*, I was not. I was blessed by him and designated, well in a sense chosen. . . ."

Possible successors

It should be noted further that at various times Joseph Smith had indicated a number of men or groups of men who might possibly succeed him. These included his brother Hyrum, Sidney Rigdon, Oliver Cowdery, David Whitmer, his son Joseph III, even his yet unborn son David; and, most importantly, on a number of occasions, the Council of the Twelve Apostles.

Nor was it unusual for fathers to give their sons blessings of this kind. Orson Pratt, an Apostle, similarly blessed his son in a spirit of hopefulness that he would rise to leadership. Brigham Young and others similarly blessed their sons.

We in the Church recognize that the fulfillment of all blessings given under authority of the priesthood is conditioned upon two things: one, the worthiness and faithfulness of the recipient, and, two, the overriding will and wisdom of God.

Keys and authority of the priesthood

As all students of our history know, we have maintained and followed the position that the keys and the authority of the priesthood, that authority without which there can be no true Church of Jesus Christ, were given to the Council of the Twelve Apostles in the very early days of the Church so that in the event of the death of the president the authority would remain and be passed on legally and properly for so long as the Church should continue.

For instance, in the great revelation on priesthood which we know as section 107 of the Doctrine and Covenants, which was received and recorded on March 28, 1835, the Lord spoke of the governance of his Church and said of the Twelve after

speaking of the Presidency: "They form a quorum, equal in authority and power to" the presidency. (D&C 107:24.)

Two years later, on July 23, 1837, this principle was again affirmed through revelation: "For unto you, the Twelve, and those, the First Presidency, who are appointed with you to be your counselors and your leaders, is the power of this priesthood given, for the last days and for the last time." (D&C 112:30.)

Again on January 19, 1841, the Lord said through the Prophet Joseph: "I give unto you my servant Brigham Young to be a president over the Twelve traveling council;

"Which Twelve hold the keys to open up the authority of my kingdom upon the four corners of the earth, and after that to send my word to every creature." (D&C 124:127-28.)

The record of a special conference held in Nauvoo on August 16, 1841, states: "The time had come when the Twelve should be called upon to stand in their place next to the First Presidency, . . . and assist to bear off the kingdom victorious to the nations. . . .

"Motion seconded and carried that the conference approve of the instructions of President Smith, in relation to the Twelve, and that they proceed accordingly, to attend to the duties of their office." ("Conference Minutes," *Times and Seasons*, 2 [1 Sept. 1841]: 521-22.)

It is abundantly clear that the Lord placed the Council of the Twelve, with Brigham Young as its president, next to the Prophet Joseph Smith and gave unto them the keys and the authority to advance the Church under the direction of the Prophet while he was alive, and to govern after his death. The revelations I have just read and the minutes of the Nauvoo meeting were recorded from three to nine years before the blessing of which we are speaking.

"The kingdom of God will roll on"

The winter of 1843-1844 was a season of great tension in Nauvoo. Enemies were plotting the destruction of the Church. During that winter, on a number of occasions, Joseph assembled the Twelve in the upper room of his brick store on Water Street in Nauvoo. Our archives contain a number of documents attesting to these meetings and what was done in them. I have time to quote from the record of only one who was present. There were many. Wrote he of Joseph Smith:

"This great and good man was led, before his death, to call the Twelve together, from time to time, and to instruct them in all things pertaining to the kingdom, ordinances, and government of God. He often observed that he was laying the foundation, but it would remain for the Twelve to complete the building. Said he, 'I know not why; but for some reason I am constrained to hasten my preparations, and to confer upon the Twelve all the ordinances, keys, covenants, endowments, and sealing ordinances of the priesthood . . . for, said he, the Lord is about to lay the burden on your shoulders and let me rest awhile; and if they kill me . . . the kingdom of God will roll on, as I have now finished the work which was laid upon me, by committing to you all things for the building up of the kingdom according to the heavenly vision, and the pattern shown me from heaven.' " (Parley P. Pratt, "Proclamation," *Millennial Star*, 5 [March 1845]: 151.)

As you know, Joseph Smith was killed by the Carthage mob on June 27, 1844. On the following 8th of August a congregation of thousands assembled in Nauvoo. Sidney Rigdon, who had served as a counselor to Joseph Smith, spoke for an hour and a half, proposing that he be appointed guardian of the Church.

There was no affirmative response. That afternoon Brigham Young spoke on behalf of the Apostles. Many present testified that he looked and sounded like the martyred Prophet. When, following his talk, a proposal was put that the Twelve lead the Church, having been given the keys by Joseph, the vote was overwhelmingly in favor.

Surely no one who is acquainted with the subsequent history can doubt the strength of that leadership. Work went forward on the temple and other projects. Then in February of 1846 the unparalleled movement began from Nauvoo on the Mississippi to Winter Quarters on the Missouri, and subsequently to this valley of the Great Salt Lake. So great was the faith of the tens of thousands involved, so strong their testimony, that many gave their lives rather than falter. Where could one find a more powerful witness for the validity of their leadership than in the actions of those who left their homes in Nauvoo to gather here in the valleys of the mountains in response to the call of the Twelve with Brigham Young at their head and subsequently as president of the Church?

Take for instance this man, Thomas Bullock, whose hand evidently recorded the document we are discussing. If he wrote that blessing, he knew about it. It was reportedly found among papers left at his death.

Thomas Bullock had joined the Church in England in November 1841, and had emigrated to Nauvoo in 1843. He served as a clerk to Joseph Smith. He and his family were among the last group of Saints to leave Nauvoo in the fall of 1846. While desperately ill he was faced by the mob with rifles and bayonets at point-blank range and ordered to leave the city within twenty minutes or be shot. He challenged the men to shoot, suggesting that he would probably die soon anyway. The captain responded, "If you will re-

nounce Mormonism you may stay here, and we will protect you." Brother Bullock replied that he had legal ownership of his home, that he had committed no crime. "But," said he, "I am a Mormon, and if I live, I shall follow the Twelve." He was one of the sick and dying carried from that place, whose life, along with those of others of his company, was preserved by the miraculous coming of flocks of quail into their Iowa camp.

When the Saints left Winter Quarters in the early spring of 1847, he was chosen as clerk of the first company. He kept a valuable record of that long trek. He made a second trip East and again back to the valley in 1848. He served a mission to England from 1856 to 1858.

Unbroken chain of authority

The question naturally follows: Would he have been willing to pay so heavy a price for his membership in the Church and to have suffered so much to advance its cause as a missionary at the call of Brigham Young if he had any doubt that President Young was the proper leader of the Church and that this right belonged to another according to a blessing which he had in his possession and which he had written with his own pen?

Brethren and sisters, from the tragedy of that 27th of June, 1844, when Joseph Smith sealed his testimony with his blood, from the confirmation that came into the hearts of the thousands assembled in Nauvoo on that subsequent August 8th, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints has gone steadily forward and has never taken a backward step. That same authority which Joseph held, those same keys and powers which were the very essence of his divinely given right to preside, were by him conferred upon the Twelve

Apostles with Brigham Young at their head. Every president of the Church since then has come to that most high and sacred office out of the Council of the Twelve. Each of these men has been blessed with the spirit and power of revelation from on high. There has been an unbroken chain from Joseph Smith, Jr., to Spencer W. Kimball. Of that I bear solemn witness and testimony before you this day. This Church is built upon the sure word of prophecy and revelation—built, as Paul wrote to the Ephesians, “upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone.” (Eph. 2:20.)

We were glad to see our brethren of the Reorganized Church get the document which contains a

father’s blessing given upon the head of a son he loved. It is a precious artifact, with great sentimental value for the family of Joseph Smith. It does not seriously raise any question concerning the validity of succession in the presidency through the Council of the Twelve Apostles as that body was established by the Prophet and as it has functioned under the revelations of God. Of this I testify in the name of Jesus Christ, amen.

President Kimball

Elder Gordon B. Hinckley, a member of the Council of the Twelve Apostles, has just spoken to us. We shall now hear from Elder Marvin J. Ashton, also a member of the Council of the Twelve Apostles.

Elder Marvin J. Ashton

Love is important

A few weeks ago, just before 6:00 A.M., my wife and I boarded a taxi to begin the last lap of our trip to Salt Lake City from Australia. Our driver, who had been on duty since 3:00 A.M., was anxious to talk with us, his first passengers of the day. We learned his parents were born just outside of Mexico City. They moved to Chicago, where he was born, and then moved to New Mexico. Twenty years earlier our friend had come for a short visit to San Francisco and had never left. During our trip to the airport, this man related a few incidents from which some great truths were reemphasized.

His parents, he told us, had remained in New Mexico, but liked to visit him and his brother whenever they could afford it because they loved being with their children and grandchildren. In New Mexico his mother’s health was rather poor, but

whenever she was in San Francisco, she seemed to feel much better. This discerning son had said to his brother, “I know just exactly what mother needs.”

He said, “I found a large truck. My brother and I drove to New Mexico, loaded our parents and all their possessions into the truck, and brought them to live near those who loved them most. Mother’s health improved noticeably.” Then he added, “You know, love is very important if it is done right.”

Teach children to work

The second incident related by this humble but wise man was also significant. He said, “I teach all my children to work. I want them to have schooling, but they must learn to work to get it. I just finished helping my sixteen-year-old son get a part-time job at a bank. While he is

going to school, he only works two hours a day, but he is learning to work. He knows I love him because I do my part, too. Due to the uncertainty of my driving hours, I can't always take him to work, but I'm always there to bring him home. He looks forward to our ride together, and so do I."

Family-oriented objectives

One other important point was made by this unusual taxi operator. He told us that some of his unmarried friends who are also taxi drivers are often out of money. They come to him to borrow. He indicated that he is generally able to help them over tight money spots. When his companions asked how he is able to support his family on his salary when they can't even keep themselves, he said, "I tell them I don't waste money at the races or on liquor or tobacco. My wife fixes our meals at home, and we don't have to pay for expensive restaurant food." He smiled when he added, "We do our partying with our family." This man's objectives are family-oriented, and he has learned the folly of serving the gambling, drinking, and momentary expensive habits.

A happy man, this driver; he has realized through experience important areas of love. He knows that nurturing love is healing; it is teaching. It requires sacrifice, and that which we love will be that to which we give our allegiance. He had shared some basic principles of love in action that were potent. Frankly, we were enjoying his comments so much we could have wished the airport terminal were another half an hour away.

Choose carefully where to serve

This taxi driver knew where to place his love. We, too, must choose

carefully the areas in which we serve, because where we serve, there will be our love. During our lifetime, areas of love must be put in proper perspective.

In childhood we anxiously strive to ride that bicycle, to skate, to ski, to learn the laws of balance. Then our love of wheels and speed and balance may become one of the joys of life. As we mature and serve and sacrifice for other interests, new loves develop. A farmer grows to love his land; a scholar his books; a businessman his company. We have all witnessed the love of parents for their children, the love of a bishop for members of his ward, the love of a young man for his new car, the love an engaged young lady has for a ring just received from someone very special.

Equally apparent in the world today is the love of that which is evil. We may jeopardize our future by loving and sacrificing for that which is not conducive to our health or our progress.

Many today are caught up in their love for worldly goods which they think will bring them fame, fortune, and popularity. They, too, reap the rewards of loving incorrectly. In these cases also, that which they serve they will learn to love. What we learn to love can make or break our lives.

Love of money, drugs, and alcohol can turn men into thieves, murderers, and derelicts. First they love the effects of those evil things; then they sacrifice all—life, health, and liberty—for that which they thought were treasures. Love of the sensual, drugs, and lies grows as we serve in these appealing areas offered by Satan. Love bonds become strong and intense in proportion to our continuing service. A man who learns to love a lie serves dishonesty all his life. In fact, a drug addict can usually be cured more quickly than a liar.

One of the greatest accomplishments of Satan in these last days is his success in turning men's affection towards the destructive, the fleeting, or the worldly. Rather than planning for that which is best for all, the world is becoming increasingly "me-centered." On every hand we have many group leaders saying, "We have a right," "We demand." Many young people believe that love has "rights," one can demand of a loved one. For example, a young man often says, "If you love me, you will let me . . ." He would take what he supposes are his rights rather than serving the higher standards of morality. Such a request does not bespeak love.

Serve best interests

Day-to-day acts of service, whether for good or evil, may not seem important, but they are building cords of love that become so strong they can seldom be broken. Ours is to place our areas of love in proper perspective. Meaningful love always works for our eternal progress and not against it.

One who loves has and feels responsibility. Paul in 1 Corinthians says love thinketh no evil, is not self-seeking, is long-suffering, and is kind. (See 1 Cor. 13:4-5.) If we look at love between two who are preparing for temple marriage, we see the elements of sacrifice and of serving each other's best interests, not a shortsighted "me" interest. True love and happiness in courtship and marriage are based upon honesty, self-respect, sacrifice, consideration, courtesy, kindness, and placing "we" ahead of "me." Those who would have us forfeit virtue and chastity to prove our love in sexual participation out of wedlock are neither friends nor eternally family-oriented. To classify them as selfish and unwise is not too severe. Those who

serve the flesh will never know the love and fruits of purity.

Sacrifice with rewards

A new convert to the Church recently shared this story. "I was in and out of enforced confinement most of my teen years. It wasn't so bad being there because the food was pretty good, and we were treated all right. But it did get boring, so when anyone had any reading material, funny books, magazines, or anything, we would trade our food for a chance to borrow those items. One day I saw a fellow with a nice, thick book. I knew it would take a long time to read, so I offered him my pork chops, my potatoes, and all my main course food items for a week. He accepted my offer and loaned me the book. As I read it, I knew I was reading something very special and very true. The book for which I had sacrificed my food was titled the Book of Mormon. When I had a chance, I found the missionaries, changed my habits, and am now finding a new way of life. I love that book for which I traded my food."

Here was an unusual but worthwhile sacrifice with rewarding results. This convert indicated that the more time he spends with this book, the greater his love becomes for the truths he is finding between its covers.

Love for one's family is not the love of a martyr. Think back about the practical sermon of our taxi driver. "I teach my children to work, but I let them know I care. I do my part, too." Giving our time, the listening ear, the understanding heart, and the unconditional love, even opening doors of opportunity at times are some ways to serve those we love. But if we deprive family members of opportunities to learn to work, if we teach them to avoid or escape the responsibilities for their own actions,

if we use them to further our own ambitions, then we do not serve them well or love them prudently.

Give a child an opportunity to work and contribute in the home, and his love of family will increase. As he is encouraged to give time and sacrifice to develop his talents—whether they be academic, music, drama, sports, leadership, or whatever—he will develop a love for that which brings him success. Children will love those talents or possessions to which we encourage them to give time and effort.

We serve what we love

As adults, if our top priorities are constantly directed toward the acquisition of more and better worldly goods, it will not take long to increase our love in those directions. The purchase of a larger house or a nicer car or a more expensive boat may cause us to sacrifice our resources and develop an unwise love for these symbols of success and pleasure. We learn to love that which we serve, and we serve that which we love.

How can we decrease our love for things not for our best good? We must examine our lives, see what services we are rendering and what sacrifices are being made, and then stop the expenditure of time and effort in these directions. If this can be managed, then that love will wither and die. Our love should be channeled into sources that are eternally oriented. Our neighbors and families will respond to our love if we will but follow through with sustaining support and self-sharing. True love is as eternal as life itself. Some callings and assignments in the Church may seem insignificant and unimportant at the time, but with each willingly fulfilled assignment, love of the Lord will grow. We learn to love God as we serve and know Him.

We love that to which we give time

How can we help a new convert to learn to love the gospel? By finding ways for him to serve and sacrifice. We must constantly emphasize the truth that we love that to which we give time, whether it be the gospel, God, or gold. Often we hear expressions of love for the scriptures, including Jesus' teachings. Those who study, practice, and apply the truths not only know them best, but are fortified to use them for guidance all along life's paths. The man who most appreciated the opportunity of tithing payment is he who experiences the joys and blessings that come through sacrifice, and obedience to that law. Our appreciation and love of the gospel and its teachings will always be in proportion to our service and commitment to the gospel.

The greatest example of love available to all of us is, of course, found in the scripture from John: "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son." (John 3:16.) By the greatest of all acts of love and by this supreme sacrifice, God set the pattern. He demonstrated to us that His love was unconditional and sufficient to encircle every person.

Love is path to eternal life

While Jesus was on earth, He taught us ways to use love correctly. We recall the situation when the scribes and Pharisees brought before the Savior a woman taken in adultery. Their purpose was not to show love for either the woman or the Savior, but to embarrass and trick Jesus. They quoted the Law of Moses which said, "Such should be stoned," and asked of the Master, "What sayest thou?" The accusers walked away one by one when Jesus encouraged the one without sin to cast the first stone. We recall that Jesus asked of

the woman, "Where are those thine accusers? hath no man condemned thee?" She answered "No man, Lord." And Jesus said to her, "Neither do I condemn thee: go, and sin no more." (See John 8:1-11.)

Jesus did not condone adultery; there is no doubt about His attitude toward proper moral conduct. He chose to teach with love—to show the scribes and Pharisees the need of serving the individual for her best good, and to show the destructive forces of trickery and embarrassment.

Jesus demonstrated to us that under all circumstances there is a proper way to show love.

Perhaps our taxi driver has learned to apply the same Christian principle in his life when he wisely said, "You know, love is very important if it is done right." The Savior's conduct would entitle all of us to conclude also that love is right when it is channeled to proper areas and given the right priorities in our lives.

We live in a complex world. There are many forces calling out, "Love me." A sure way to set our guidelines for that which we choose to serve and learn to love is to follow the admonition of Joshua: "As for

me and my house, we will serve the Lord." (Josh. 24:15.)

Let us look to our own lives. We serve that which we love. If we sacrifice and give our love for that which our Father in Heaven asks of us, it will help us set our footsteps upon the path of eternal life. Again I conclude, what we serve we learn to love, and what we love takes our time, and what takes our time is what we love.

May God help us to love the right, love the truth, and love areas of service that are rewarding and eternal, I pray in the name of Jesus Christ, amen.

President Kimball

We have just listened to Elder Marvin J. Ashton, a member of the Council of the Twelve Apostles.

The choir and congregation will now join in singing "Oh Say, What Is Truth?" After the singing, Elder Loren C. Dunn, a member of the First Quorum of the Seventy, will address us.

The choir and congregation sang "Oh Say, What Is Truth?"

Elder Loren C. Dunn

I have been inspired, as I know you have, with the singing of this lovely choir, and I think especially of their song at the beginning of this meeting, "True to the Faith." It is faith that I would like to speak about this afternoon.

Individual faith

We have been referred to as a believing people. Certainly individual faith is the foundation stone of the gospel and the quality which is most important to us as individuals.

Joseph Smith said, "Faith is the assurance which men have of the existence of things which they have not seen, and the principle of action in all intelligent beings. . . . [It] is the first great governing principle." (*Lectures on Faith*, comp. N. B. Lundwall, Salt Lake City: N. B. Lundwall, n.d., pp. 7, 10.)

And Jacob teaches that the Lord commands all men that they must have "perfect faith in the Holy One of Israel, or they cannot be saved in the Kingdom of God." (2 Ne. 9:23.)

As a principle of power and of

action, and as the key to our salvation, our individual faith, then, becomes of absolute importance to us.

Paul admonished us to "be thou an example of the believers, in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith, in purity." (1 Tim. 4:12.)

"If ye can no more than desire to believe," said Alma, "let this desire work in you, even until ye believe in a manner that ye can give place for a portion of my words." (Alma 32:27.)

Moroni says, "Dispute not because ye see not, for ye receive no witness until after the trial of your faith." (Ether 12:6.)

There are many steps a person can take to develop the gift and power of faith. In the next few minutes I would like to suggest six of these steps.

"Believe in God"

Number one: Faith is the ability to recognize the Lord as all-powerful and the giver of all blessings.

As King Benjamin put it:

"Believe in God; believe that he is, and that he created all things, both in heaven and in earth; believe that he has all wisdom, and all power, both in heaven and in earth; believe that man doth not comprehend all things which the Lord can comprehend." (Mosiah 4:9.)

Sometimes we compartmentalize. We pray about one thing and worry about something else. We seem to limit the ability of the Lord to help us in every aspect of our lives.

John A. Widtsoe tells us the following:

"For several years, under a Federal grant with my staff of workers we had gathered thousands of data in the field of soil moisture; but I could not extract any general law running through them. I gave up at last. My wife and I went to the temple that

day to forget the failure. In the third endowment room, out of the unseen, came the solution, which has long since gone into print." (*In A Sunlit Land: The Autobiography of John A. Widtsoe*, Salt Lake City: Deseret News Press, 1952, p. 177.)

Faith, then, is the realization that the Lord can help us with all things.

Follow promptings

Number two: Faith is the ability to do what we are prompted to do, and when we are prompted to do it.

A few years ago when we were presiding over the Sydney Mission, I was earnestly seeking a blessing from the Lord. The mission had done well but was pausing on a plateau, and we needed to move ahead once again.

On one particular day I was fasting and praying that the Lord would lead us to a new level of achievement. In the midst of my prayers came the clear impression to seek out my son and give him a blessing. I followed the prompting and found my son, whom I am close to, in another part of the house, attending to his high school studies.

I said, "How are things going?"

He answered, in typical teenage fashion, "Why?"

Not knowing what else to say, I asked, "Do you want a blessing?"

He looked at me in stunned silence for a few seconds and then said, "Yes."

The inspiration that followed from that blessing proved to be of great importance to both my son and me. It was an experience that neither of us will forget.

Yet this would have been lost had I stopped to question why the Lord was turning me to my first responsibility, my family, when I was seeking a blessing for the mission.

Live laws of God

Number three: Faith is the ability to live the laws of God that control the blessings we are in need of. While we should not keep the commandments just to receive blessings, nevertheless, the blessings are there.

Harold B. Lee tells the experience of praying very hard for a material blessing he needed badly. He states that one day while he was praying for this blessing, he remembered that he had recently received some income that he had not yet tithed. It was as if, he said, the accusing voice of the Lord was saying: You want a blessing from me but you have not been obedient to the laws upon which such blessings are based. ("Faith," address delivered at Brigham Young University, 28 Jun 1955, tape in Historical Department Archives.)

He said that he went and paid the tithing on that income, and then he again sought that particular blessing of the Lord.

Build an "ark"

Number four: Faith is the ability to act "as if."

In his teachings, Paul said:

"By faith Noah, being warned of God of things not seen . . . prepared an ark to the saving of his house." (Heb. 11:7.)

President Kimball gives us this insight to Noah and the ark:

"As yet there was no evidence of rain and flood. . . . His warnings were considered irrational. . . . How foolish to build an ark on dry ground with the sun shining and life moving forward as usual! But time ran out. . . . The floods came. The disobedient . . . Were drowned. The miracle of the ark followed the faith manifested in its building." (*Faith Precedes the Miracle*, Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1972, pp. 5-6.)

Many years ago during the dark days of World War II, Elvon W. Orme, the president of the Australia Mission was invited to a faithful widow's house for Sunday dinner. Rationing had taken its toll, and many of the good foods had long since disappeared from the shelves of the local stores.

When the president arrived, he was shocked to find a table filled with foods that were in short supply and had not been seen for months.

"I can't eat this," he said, almost embarrassed that he was taking it out of the mouth of a widow.

"I'm afraid you'll have to," she said. "You see, I listened to the Brethren years ago and put in my year's supply, and this is the only kind of food I have."

She showed the faith to act "as if" by storing food, and the faith produced a miracle in the time of need.

I wonder how many Saints will be able to withstand the disaster of their own personal flood by showing faith in the advice of modern prophets and building an ark of family preparedness.

Believe in people

Number five: Faith is the ability to be charitable and to believe in people.

The Savior of the world is the foremost example of this love. After having been rejected and despised, he asked his Father to forgive those who crucified him because "they know not what they do." (Luke 23:34.)

Joseph Smith is another example. After living a life filled with trials and betrayals, he said as he was going to Carthage:

"I am going like a lamb to the slaughter, but . . . I have a conscience void of offense toward . . . all men." (*History of the Church*, 6:555; italics omitted.)

I knew a man once whom I respected very much and who had this quality. On one occasion, a beggar came from out of town and appeared at his door and asked for money. My friend said, "I have an old barn that needs painting. If you want to paint it, I'll pay you for it." They went out to look at the barn, and then the man was sent to England's paint store and arrangements were made for him to pick up the paint he needed.

The barn was painted, and the man was paid and left town. Shortly after, Mr. England called my friend and said that the man had picked up far more paint than was needed to paint the barn. In short, my friend had been taken.

Yet, he took the opportunity to teach his sons a lesson.

"Had I known what he did, I would have stopped him," he said. "But we have our painted barn, and the painter, whatever his problems, will always know that there was someone willing to believe in him."

Faith cannot be nourished in a heart that has been made hard by continued cynicism, skepticism, and unforgiveness.

A person who cannot see the good in people not only destroys his own faith, but also becomes a basically unhappy person.

Follow inspired leaders

Number six: Faith is the ability to allow ourselves to be guided by the priesthood.

Paul teaches us this important truth:

"And he [the Lord] gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers." And here he tells us why these priesthood leaders have been given to the Saints: "till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure

of the stature of the fulness of Christ." (Eph. 4:11, 13.)

Priesthood leaders, all leaders who have been called by revelation under the hands of the priesthood, have been given to us so we can come to a unity of the faith, to the end that we might know the Savior and have his image in our countenance and become like him, "that every man might speak in the name of God the Lord, even the Savior of the world." (D&C 1:20.)

Years ago, President Joseph Fielding Smith, then a member of the Quorum of the Twelve, attended a stake conference where a relatively new stake president had been called. A man repeatedly came up to President Smith and asked him for counsel concerning a personal matter. Finally, President Smith said he would see the man, provided the new stake president could be there. As the man unfolded his situation, the stake president was prompted with what the person needed to do. Yet President Smith listened to the brother and surprised everyone by saying, "I have no counsel for you." The man was surprised, and he left. After he had gone, President Smith turned to the stake president and said, "I knew how to counsel that man, but I was also prompted to know that he would go against the counsel. So rather than condemn him for going against the counsel of the priesthood, I told him nothing."

From this we learn that it is not enough to seek the direction of those whom God has called to lead us—but we must come with a willingness to follow the counsel of inspired leaders in order to develop our faith.

Beacon and foundation stone

Latter-day Saints need to believe. They need to take every opportunity to develop faith, both in their own lives and in the lives of others.

Faith is a part of our heritage.

Those who embrace the gospel of Jesus Christ are the blood of Israel, and characteristic of the house of Israel is the ability to believe. Some have referred to it as "believing blood."

My faith is both a beacon and a foundation stone. It is born of the Spirit and enriched by a multitude of prayers and promptings. It lifts my soul upwards. It opens my heart to peace and joy. It nourishes and reaffirms those things that I fully know. My faith is such that I know God lives. I know he lives and Jesus is the Christ and Joseph Smith was a true prophet and we sit in the midst

of apostles and prophets today.

May the Lord bless us with faith as we go forward in our lives, in the name of Jesus Christ, amen.

President Kimball

Elder Loren C. Dunn, a member of the First Quorum of the Seventy, has just spoken to us.

Elder Angel Abrea, who was sustained this morning as a new member of the First Quorum of the Seventy, will now address us. He will be followed by Elder Theodore M. Burton, a member of the First Quorum of the Seventy.

Elder Angel Abrea

Gracias

A few days ago, when I received a phone call at the mission home in Rosario, Argentina, and President Kimball extended to me this calling, Sister Abrea and I were not only touched emotionally, but also overwhelmed by the tremendous responsibility. A feeling and a word immediately filled me. The feeling, gratitude; the word, *gracias*—thank you.

Thank you to those two lady missionaries who, almost thirty-eight years ago, arrived at my door and brought the good news of the gospel. Thank you to my dear mother, who took me to Primary, to each meeting of the Church, with whom I read for the first time the Book of Mormon, and who even now, by means of her activity and faithful life in the Church, continues to set for me an example worth emulating.

Thank you to my father, who I know has accepted the word of the gospel and baptism beyond the veil, who, when I was a youth of eleven years, sat with me at my bed one

Sunday morning and said to me, "Angel, if you are going to be a member of the Church, you will always have to comply with everything that it asks of you. You have accepted a commitment, and you should honor it."

Thank you to my beloved wife, who has helped and sustained me, always full of faith and love for the gospel, a constant inspiration in my life.

Thank you for my three daughters, who, because of their love and dedication to the Church, are a pride, joy, and happiness in my life.

Thank you to my leaders and teachers, who, many times under unfavorable circumstances, have done their part. Thank you to the hundreds of missionaries who have made possible the development of the Church in the countries of South America. And especially thank you to the parents of those missionaries who have sent their sons and daughters to unknown countries, perhaps with fear and anxiety, but with the surety that they would be doing what the Lord required at the time.

"My surety, my rock, my sustenance"

And finally, thank you, Father, for my testimony, for knowing without the slightest doubt that my Father in Heaven sent his Only Begotten Son in order to bring about the great work of redemption. Thank you, too, for the knowledge that Christ was resurrected and that he lives. Thank you for knowing that Joseph Smith received a divine mission to fulfill, that he carried it out, and that by his mission we arrived at the true knowledge of our Savior, Jesus Christ. Thank you because I know that The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints is true and is the kingdom of God upon the earth and that it is presided over and directed by a modern prophet, President Kimball, who has been a continuous influence in my life, ever since the years of my early youth.

For this testimony, which is my surety, my rock, my sustenance, which I have received by the mediation of the Holy Ghost, I give infinite thanks, and I place all my talents, time, efforts, and all that I possess to the work to which I have been called. That would be my way to express in part my thanks. *Gracias*. I say these things in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, amen.

President Kimball

Elder Angel Abrea, who was sustained this morning as a new member of the First Quorum of the Seventy, has just spoken to us. We shall now hear from Elder Theodore M. Burton. He will be followed by Elder LeGrand Richards of the Council of the Twelve Apostles.

Elder Theodore M. Burton

In our church we often speak of light and truth, but just what do these words mean? In my earlier years as a scientist, I was interested in the concept of absolute zero, where, theoretically, there is a complete absence of thermal energy. Such a degree of coldness is difficult to comprehend. However, we all know how uncomfortable we feel when the temperature drops toward freezing. Water boils at 100 degrees Celsius and freezes at 0 degrees Celsius, but absolute zero is about 273 degrees Celsius below freezing. Such temperatures are approached in outer space.

Cold and utter darkness

When I was a young boy, I went with my father to inspect a mine in Nevada. We each had flashlights, but took no extra batteries with us, for we did not expect

to be in the mine very long. But the tunnel was longer, colder, and deeper than we anticipated. Before we got to the end of the mine, where the mineral was, father told me to turn off my flashlight to save my batteries. By the time father had finished inspecting the mine, his flashlight began to dim, and he suggested we had better turn back. Before long his flashlight gave out completely, and I can still remember—until I again turned on my light—the panic I felt to be in such cold and utter blackness. Although my own batteries gave out before we reached the mine entrance, we were by then guided by the dim light coming from the mouth of the tunnel. How good it felt to see the light increase as we made our way back to the entrance and found ourselves in warm, brilliant sunlight.

I have since wondered how anyone could knowingly prefer to live

where it is dark and cold. How could anybody willingly prefer darkness and misery over light and warmth? Yet darkness, cold, and misery will be the lot of those who willingly and knowingly reject the Lord. John wrote, "God is light, and in him is no darkness at all." (1 John 1:5.)

Light versus darkness

I would like to speak about God's realm of light in contrast to the dark realm of Satan. Those who follow Satan will be cast into outer darkness, "where there is weeping, and wailing, and gnashing of teeth." (D&C 133:73.) How terrible to live in such a place of darkness and cold. It is entirely different from what we usually think of as "burning in hell." That burning is the lasting regret one feels who has chosen the darkness of Satan in preference to the light of Christ.

Through modern revelation we have been taught that "the glory of God is intelligence, or, in other words, light and truth." Such light and truth forsake the evil one. (See D&C 93:36-37.)

We have been advised that if our eye be single to the glory of God, our whole body shall be filled with light, and there shall be no darkness in us, for a body which is filled with God's light will be able to comprehend all things. (See D&C 88:67.)

We further read that the light of God "shineth in darkness, and the darkness comprehendeth it not; nevertheless, the day shall come when you shall comprehend even God, being quickened in him and by him.

"Then shall ye know that ye have seen me, that I am, and that I am the true light that is in you, and that you are in me; otherwise ye could not abound." (D&C 88:49-50.)

There is great promise in these words for those who seek the light of truth.

The light of God

We need not think that the light of God is limited only to the things of the Spirit. We are taught that "the light which shineth, which giveth you light, is through him who enlighteneth your eyes, which is the same light that quickeneth your understandings;

"Which light proceedeth forth from the presence of God to fill the immensity of space—

"The light which is in all things, which giveth life to all things, which is the law by which all things are governed, even the power of God who sitteth upon his throne, who is in the bosom of eternity, who is in the midst of all things." (D&C 88:11-13.)

God's light includes the physical light we see, which makes us feel so warm and comfortable. God's light is also the power to understand and comprehend all things. In other words, all kinds of light are related to intelligence and truth.

This is substantiated by modern revelation, which teaches us more about Jesus Christ, who is "he that ascended up on high, as also he descended below all things, in that he comprehended all things, that he might be in all and through all things, the light of truth;

"Which truth shineth. This [truth] is the light of Christ. As also he is in the sun, and the light of the sun, and the power thereof by which it was made.

"As also he is in the moon, and is the light of the moon, and the power thereof by which it was made;

"As also the light of the stars, and the power thereof by which they were made;

"And the earth also, and the power thereof, even the earth upon which you stand." (D&C 88:6-10.)

The light of Christ therefore includes not only spiritual light but also physical light, and is a key to

understanding that form of energy which is represented by the light we see all around us.

Man may know good from evil

Satan is that wicked one who comes and takes away light and truth from the children of men through their disobedience and because of the traditions of their fathers. But the Lord has commanded us to bring up our children in light and truth. (See D&C 93:39-40.) The opposite of light is darkness, and the opposite of truth is falsehood.

The admonition of the prophet Moroni becomes important for us to understand as he tells us to take heed "that ye do not judge that which is evil to be of God, or that which is good and of God to be of the devil.

"For behold, my brethren, it is given unto you to judge, that ye may know good from evil; and the way to judge is as plain, that ye may know with a perfect knowledge, as the daylight is from the dark night.

"For behold, the Spirit of Christ is given to every man, that he may know good from evil; wherefore, I show unto you the way to judge; for every thing which inviteth to do good, and to persuade to believe in Christ, is sent forth by the power and gift of Christ; wherefore ye may know with a perfect knowledge it is of God.

"But whatsoever thing persuadeth men to do evil, and believe not in Christ, and deny him, and serve not God, then ye may know with a perfect knowledge it is of the devil; for after this manner doth the devil work, for he persuadeth no man to do good, no, not one; neither do his angels; neither do they who subject themselves unto him." (Moro. 7:14-17.)

Spirit more powerful than body

The spirit within man is eternal, whereas his present body is mortal or

temporal. Therefore, the spirit is more powerful than the body and is able to control the body. Sometimes we think ourselves sick. There are also times when we can think ourselves well. But there is no need to let the body and bodily appetites control our actions. The spirit within us is more powerful than the body, and we can use that spirit to commit ourselves to righteous actions. We *can* control the body and its bodily appetites. It is fallacious to say that we were created with propensities and appetites we cannot control. It is simply not true that people are born with such powerful appetites and passions that they are powerless to control them. God would not be a righteous God if man were created with drives he could not control.

I admit that some people have greater drives and appetites than others, but I say that a righteous God has given us minds and wills by means of which, if we desire, we can control and limit those passions and appetites. Satan has no control over us unless we give him that control.

I admit that except for the Savior no person alone can completely harness his appetites and passions. I do say, however, that with the help of God we can all learn to control those appetites and passions. As we practice righteousness and approach ever closer to God, the easier it becomes to resist temptation and to live in accordance with that light and truth which emanates from Jesus Christ.

God's laws are spiritual

I have been thinking more and more about a scripture which I am just beginning to understand. Let me read it: "Wherefore, verily I say unto you that all things unto me are spiritual, and not at any time have I given unto you a law which was temporal; neither any man, nor the children of men; neither Adam, your father, whom I created.

"Behold, I gave unto him that he should be an agent unto himself; and I gave unto him commandment, but no temporal commandment gave I unto him, for my commandments are spiritual; they are not natural nor temporal, neither carnal nor sensual." (D&C 29:34-35.)

As I begin to understand this scripture, my whole concept of physical existence and these physical bodies is changing.

Take the payment of tithes and offerings as an example. Is anything apparently more temporal than money, or any other offering that we can bring from the earth? Yet since that is a law of God, there must be a spiritual basis for it or eternal reason behind this payment of tithes and offerings. When God asked us to prove him to see if he will not open the windows of heaven to us (see Mal. 3:10), what was he referring to? Was he referring only to the blessings of this earth and the promises of temporal rewards which come to us if we keep this law? Or was he referring to something spiritual, of an eternal nature, which I believe is the revelation of truth and wisdom, which can come to us from that opened window whereby we can communicate with God and know all things?

In giving us the Word of Wisdom, was God referring only to the temporal blessings of health and endurance which come to us through obedience to that law? God referred also to the "hidden treasures" of knowledge (see D&C 89:19), which, in my opinion, constitute an eternal treasure, which if used will bring us back into the warmth and light of God. Those who sit in outer dark-

ness, in the cold and misery of that existence, can never know such comfort.

Light and truth

Let me come back, then, to absolute zero, where, theoretically, there is no heat at all. It appears to me that Satan and those who follow him are on the road to losing whatever degree of light and truth they have and are approaching a similar limit of darkness and cold where all joy and happiness cease.

To summarize then, light and truth is, simply, pure intelligence.

Now, there are those who believe that this is just another church. There are even some members within the Church who regard the restored gospel as just another religious philosophy. As one of the especial witnesses, I testify to you in all earnestness that this Church was divinely founded. It is not just another church. It is *the* Church of Jesus Christ. The gospel doctrine it teaches is the divine word of God. It is light. It is truth. To ignore it or treat it as just another religious philosophy is one of the greatest mistakes a person can make. This doctrine I bear to you is the light and truth I have received to strengthen my own witness, in the name of Jesus Christ, amen.

President Kimball

Elder Theodore M. Burton, a member of the First Quorum of the Seventy, has just addressed us. Elder LeGrand Richards, a member of the Council of the Twelve Apostles, will be our concluding speaker.

Elder LeGrand Richards

I have had the privilege of filling four missions for this church and that has provided me an opportunity to

compare the teachings of this church, as we have received them through the restoration of the gospel through the

Prophet Joseph Smith, with the teachings of many other churches. My, how grateful I am to be a member of this church.

Great truths through the Restoration

Now, just to mention one or two teachings. Just think what we learn from the visit of the Father and the Son to the Prophet Joseph—a realization that the Father and the Son are two separate individuals and that they are real personages like Jesus was when he came forth from the tomb. There wasn't a church in the world that believed in that kind of God at the time the Prophet Joseph received that wonderful vision.

Then we learn that marriage can be eternal, that this is the plan of the Lord. How grateful I am for this principle, because it gives me the assurance that someday I will be reunited with that sweet companion of mine who has already preceded me into the eternal worlds. As I have said before, I would just as soon believe that death was a complete annihilation of both body and spirit as to think that I had to live on throughout the eternities that are to come without a continuation of the love ties that bind me and my wife together with the wonderful family that the Lord has given to us.

One of the other great truths that we learn through the Restoration is the fact that infants should not be baptized. The idea that young children need baptism is a mistake of men. That isn't to be found anywhere in the Lord's teachings, for Jesus took little children in his arms and blessed them.

Premortal existence

When I have discussed some of our beautiful philosophies with people of other churches, many of them have said, "We could accept your teachings, but we can't believe

that Joseph Smith was a prophet." I have thought a lot about that. I suppose that it would be almost impossible to believe that God was naive enough to choose a fourteen-year-old boy to usher in the dispensation of the fulness of times, as Paul said, in which dispensation he would "gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth." (Eph. 1:10.)

That opens the door for the consideration of another beautiful principle, and that is the principle of the premortal existence of spirits, that we are literally the children of God, the Eternal Father, that we lived with him before we came here upon this earth.

The Apostle Paul said that the Lord "hath made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth, and hath determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of their habitation." (Acts 17:26.) And he said: "We have had fathers of our flesh which corrected us, and we gave them reverence: shall we not much rather be in subjection unto the Father of spirits, and live?" (Heb. 12:9.) I like the thought that he is my father. When Jesus prayed, he didn't pray, "My Father which art in heaven"; he prayed, "Our Father which art in heaven" (Matt. 6:9), and that is a wonderful thing. That is why our Primary children sing "I am a child of God."

The calling of prophets

The Lord has his own way of calling prophets. He knew them before they were ever born here in mortality. We read in the Book of Abraham that the Lord stood in the midst of the spirits, and among them there were noble and great ones—and they couldn't be noble and great if they hadn't done something to make them noble and great. The Lord said of them: "These I will make my

rulers; . . . Abraham, thou art one of them; thou was chosen before thou wast born." (Abr. 3:22-23.) Isn't that a beautiful thought? The Lord stood in the midst of those spirits, and there were some there who became his prophets here in mortality.

We read about Jeremiah when he was called to be a prophet. He couldn't understand it, and the Lord said: "Before I formed thee in the belly I knew thee; and before thou camest forth out of the womb I sanctified thee, and I ordained thee a prophet unto the nations." (Jer. 1:5.) The Lord couldn't have ordained him if he didn't exist, and he wouldn't have ordained him before he was born if he hadn't done something in that spiritual life to prepare him to become one of the Lord's mouthpieces here upon this earth. The same thing is true with the Prophet Joseph. I will come back to that.

We read that there was war in heaven—that "Michael and his angels fought against the dragon," and the dragon (or Satan) was cast down to the earth, and the cry went out: "Wo to the inhabitants of the earth . . . for the devil is come down unto you, having great wrath" (Rev. 12:7-9, 12), and he "walketh about, seeking whom he can devour" (1 Pet. 5:8). And that is what he has been doing. He drew a third of the host of heaven with him (see Rev. 12:4), and when they were cast out, that third of the host of heaven brought with them the knowledge that they had in the spirit world, while our knowledge was temporarily taken from us through our birth into mortality.

The Apostle Paul said: "For we know in part, and we prophesy in part.

"But when that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away. . . .

"For now we see through a glass, darkly; but then face to face: now I know in part; but then shall I

know even as also I am known." (1 Cor. 13:9-10, 12.)

To me, that says there will be a complete restoration of all that we knew before we came here into mortality when we lived in the spirit world.

The best illustration we have about how we lose our knowledge is the life of the Savior. We read in the first chapter of the Gospel of John that "in the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

"All things were made by him: and without him was not any thing made that was made.

"In him was life; and the life was the light of men." (John 1:1, 3, 4.)

Then it goes on: "And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father), full of grace and truth." (John 1:14.)

According to this scripture, Jesus created everything; nevertheless, when he was born into mortality he had to learn to walk and talk like other children. At the age of twelve, we find him reasoning with the wise men in the temple, and later on he said: "The Son can do nothing of himself, but what he seeth the Father do." (John 5:19.)

Satan tries to kill prophets

Now, because Satan brought with him the knowledge that he had in the spirit world, he knew whom he had fought against in that war in heaven and he has tried to put to death the prophets of God. That is why Jesus, standing on the Mount of Olives overlooking the city of Jerusalem, said:

"O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gath-

ereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not!

"Behold, your house is left unto you desolate.

"Ye shall not see me henceforth, till ye shall say, Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord." (Matt. 23:37-39.)

Today we are coming because we have been sent in the name of the Lord. Like Paul said,

"Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God. . . .

"And how shall they hear without a preacher?

"And how shall they preach, except they be sent?" (Rom. 10:17, 14-15.)

We have been sent.

Moses

I would like to illustrate what I am trying to tell you. When Moses was born, the devil put it into the heart of Pharaoh to have all the male children in Israel put to death. Thousands had been born before that time, but Satan knew that he would have to reckon with Moses. And you remember how Moses' mother saved his life by making a basket of bulrushes and putting him in the river and how Pharaoh's daughter took him out and cared for him.

Jesus

When Jesus was born, Satan put it into the heart of Herod to put to death all the children in Bethlehem and the surrounding territory that were under two years of age. There had been thousands born before that time, but Satan knew he would have to reckon with the Savior. He was in that war that was fought in heaven when Satan and a third of the spirits were cast out.

Joseph Smith

When Joseph Smith went into the woods to pray, a boy of only four-

teen years of age, a power of darkness rested upon him until he felt like it would crush the very life out of his body; but through his prayer, finally a pillar of light descended and he was released from the power of Satan. Satan knew that he would have to reckon with that man Joseph Smith because he was one of those noble and great ones that God said he would make his rulers.

We read in the Book of Mormon that when Lehi was in the desert, he told his son Joseph that the Lord had promised Joseph who was sold into Egypt that in the latter days He would raise up a prophet from his loins like unto Moses. (See 2 Ne. 3:6-9.) And we are told in holy writ that there was no prophet in Israel like unto Moses because he walked and talked with God. (See Deut. 34:10.) This is the kind of prophet that, three thousand years before Joseph Smith was born, the Lord promised Joseph of Egypt He would raise up through his loins. He said his name should be Joseph, and his father's name should be Joseph; and he said: "Unto him will I give power to bring forth my word." (2 Ne. 3:11, 15.)

The Prophet Joseph Smith brought us the Book of Mormon, the Doctrine and Covenants, the Pearl of Great Price, and many other writings. As far as our records show, he has given us more revealed truth than any prophet who has ever lived upon the face of the earth. And the Lord said: "And not to the bringing forth my word only, . . . but to the convincing them of my word, which shall have already gone forth among them." (2 Ne. 3:11.) What did he mean by that? That in the midst of these hundreds of churches of men—the result of men's interpretations of the scriptures because they can't agree, and these churches keep multiplying—that the Lord would give to this new prophet the ability to comprehend the scriptures

that had already been sent forth among them.

Then he adds that he shall "bring my people unto salvation." (2 Ne. 3:15.) Why? Because he would receive the holy priesthood, the power to administer the saving ordinances of the gospel. Then he adds, "And I will make him great in mine eyes." (2 Ne. 3:8.) Whatever the world may think of the Prophet Joseph Smith, there is the statement of the Lord that he would be great in His eyes.

Missionary experience in Holland

Now I would like to tell you of a little experience I had in the mission field that illustrates what I think the Lord meant when he indicated that not only would the Prophet bring forth His word, but he would bring men to a conviction of His word that had already gone forth among them.

When I was in Holland, I was invited to talk to a Bible class of businessmen. We met in the home of a prominent furniture dealer. There were about twenty men; each had his Bible. The only woman there was the daughter of the man of the house. They gave me an hour and a half to discuss universal salvation, which includes our work for the dead, preaching in the spirit world, and baptism of the living for the dead. I just gave them chapter and verse and let them read the passages in their own Bibles. Then when I was through, I closed my Bible and waited for comments.

The first comment came from the daughter of the man of the house. She said: "Father, I just can't understand it. I have never attended one of these Bible classes in my life that you haven't had the last word to say on everything. And tonight you haven't said a word."

The man shook his head and said: "My daughter, there isn't anything to say. This man has been teaching us things we have never heard of, and he has been teaching them to us out of our own Bibles."

I could tell you many more stories like that!

God bless you! Thank God for the restoration of the gospel through the Prophet Joseph Smith. I leave you my testimony, in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, amen.

President Kimball

Elder LeGrand Richards, a member of the Council of the Twelve Apostles, has just been speaking to us.

We remind the brethren of the general priesthood meeting which will convene here in the Tabernacle this evening at seven o'clock.

The nationwide CBS Radio Tabernacle Choir broadcast tomorrow will be from 9:30 to 10:00 A.M. All those desiring to attend this broadcast must be in their seats no later than 9:15 A.M.

The singing for this session has been furnished by the combined institute choir. We are grateful for the presence of this young people's choir and for the beautiful spirit their music has added to this meeting.

The choir will now sing in closing "Still, Still with Thee." Following the singing, the benediction will be given by Elder John H. Groberg, a member of the First Quorum of the Seventy.

The choir sang "Still, Still with Thee."

Elder John H. Groberg offered the benediction.

GENERAL PRIESTHOOD MEETING

THIRD SESSION

The general priesthood meeting convened in the Tabernacle at 7:00 P.M. on Saturday, April 4, 1981.

President Spencer W. Kimball presided and President Marion G. Romney, Second Counselor in the First Presidency, conducted.

The music for this session was provided by a combined men's choir from the Tabernacle Choir and the Mormon Youth Chorus directed by Robert C. Bowden with Roy M. Darley at the organ.

President Romney opened this session with the following remarks:

President Marion G. Romney

Brethren, President Spencer W. Kimball, who presides at this general priesthood meeting, has asked me to conduct it.

These services are being relayed by closed-circuit transmission and will reach members of the priesthood gathered in the Salt Palace, in the Marriott Center on the BYU campus, and in approximately 2,246 other locations in many countries around the world.

We extend our greetings and blessings to all the priesthood brethren wherever they may be.

We note that Elders Rex D. Pinegar and George P. Lee are seated on the stand in the Salt Palace, and Elders Joseph B. Wirthlin and Vaughn J. Featherstone preside at the BYU Marriott Center.

The singing during this session will be furnished by the Tabernacle Choir and Mormon Youth Chorus combined men's choir under the di-

rection of Robert C. Bowden with Roy Darley at the organ.

We shall begin these services by the choir singing "Beautiful Savior." Following the singing, Elder Neal A. Maxwell, a member of the Presidency of the First Quorum of the Seventy, will offer the invocation.

The combined men's choir sang "Beautiful Savior."

Elder Neal A. Maxwell offered the invocation.

President Romney

The choir will now favor us with "O My Father," after which we shall be pleased to hear from President Ezra Taft Benson of the Council of the Twelve Apostles.

For the benefit of those brethren who did not hear the proceedings of either of the general sessions earlier today, we announce that Elder Angel Abrea of Argentina has been sustained as a member of the First Quorum of the Seventy.

The combined men's choir sang "O My Father."

President Romney

President Ezra Taft Benson, President of the Council of the Twelve Apostles, will be our first speaker this evening. He will be followed by Bishop Victor L. Brown, Presiding Bishop of the Church.

President Ezra Taft Benson

Great things required of fathers

When the Lord declared that "power is not given unto Satan to tempt little children, until they begin to become accountable," He revealed that this period of childhood and unaccountability was given to children so that "great things may be required at the hand of their fathers." (See D&C 29:47-48.)

"That great things may be required at the hand of their fathers"! What confidence the Lord has in fathers, and what a responsibility He has placed on fathers! Great things are required of fathers today.

When I think of fathers, I think of Adam—progenitor of us all—who faithfully taught his posterity in the ways of righteousness. I think of father Abraham, whose faith knows no peer among mortal fathers. I esteem Jacob, or Israel, with a feeling akin to reverence for his diligence and long-suffering. I honor the name of Lehi for the example he gave to his sons.

In this dispensation, I think of Joseph Smith, Sr., first to give credence to his prophet-son's testimony. I think of the noble example of Joseph F. Smith, sixth President of the Church and father of the tenth President.

I revere these noble men—not just because they were great prophets, but because they were great fathers, who realized what the Lord required of them, and they lived up to that expectation.

I wish to speak on this occasion to you fathers about three particular things that the Lord requires of us. These are things that every father with an ordinary amount of diligence may do. If we will do them, our homes will be blessed with peace, our names will be proudly borne by our descendants, and our association with our family may be eternal.

Fathers, what great things does the Lord require of us?

Influence for good in the home

First, provide a home where love and the Spirit of the Lord may abide. Children are born innocent, not evil. They are not sent to earth, however, to neutral environments. They are sent to homes that, for good or evil, influence their ideas, emotions, thoughts, and standards, by which future choices will be made.

One great thing the Lord requires of each of us is to provide a home where a happy, positive influence for good exists. In future years the costliness of home furnishings or the number of bathrooms will not matter much, but what will matter significantly is whether our children felt love and acceptance in the home. It will greatly matter whether there was happiness and laughter, or bickering and contention.

I am convinced that before a child can be influenced for good by his or her parents, there must be a demonstration of respect and love.

President Joseph F. Smith said: "Fathers, if you wish your children to be taught in the principles of the gospel, . . . if you wish them to be obedient to and united with you, love them! and prove to them that you do love them by your every word or act to them. For your own sake, for the love that should exist between you and your boys—however wayward they might be, . . . when you speak or talk to them, do it not in anger; do it not harshly, in a condemning spirit. Speak to them kindly; get down and weep with them, if necessary, and get them to shed tears with you if possible. Soften their hearts; get them to feel tenderly towards you. Use no lash and no violence,

but . . . approach them with reason, with persuasion and love unfeigned. With this means, if you cannot gain your boys and your girls, . . . there will be no means left in the world by which you can win them to yourselves.” (*Liahona, The Elders’ Journal*, 17 Oct. 1911, pp. 260-61.)

Many suggestions could be enumerated as to what we can and should do to make our homes places of refuge and happiness. I believe, however, that to tell a man what is expected of him is more important than to prescribe exactly how he is to get the job done.

Once you determine that a high priority in your life is to see that your wife and your children are happy, then you will do all in your power to do so. I am not just speaking of satisfying material desires, but of filling other vital needs such as appreciation, compliments, comforting, encouraging, listening, and giving love and affection.

*If with pleasure you are viewing
Anything your child is doing,
If you like him, if you love him,
Let him know.*

*Don’t withhold appreciation
Until others give expression—
If he wins your commendation
Tell him so.*

*More than fame and more than
money
Is a disposition sunny,
And some hearty warm approval
Makes one glad.*

*So if you think some praise is due
him,
Now’s the time to give it to him;
Tie him close with loving language
From his dad.*

Your supreme opportunity in life is fatherhood! These words directed to fathers by President David O. McKay should be framed by every father:

“When one puts businesses or

pleasure, or the earning of additional income, above his home, he that moment starts on the downgrade to soul weakness. When the club becomes more attractive to any man than his home, it is time for him to confess in bitter shame that he has failed to measure up to the supreme opportunity of his life, and flunked in the final test of true manhood.

“The poorest shack in which love prevails over a united family is of far greater value to God and future humanity than any other riches. In such a home God can work miracles, and will work miracles. Pure hearts in a pure home are always in whispering distance of Heaven.” (*Church News*, 7 Sept. 1968, p. 4.)

Fathers, what is the spirit in your homes?

Lead your children to Christ

Second, teach your children to understand principles of truth. In a revelation to the Prophet Joseph, the Lord directed fathers to bring up their children in light and truth. He rebuked several because of their failure to do so. Each of us would do well to review those principles given in section 93 to Joseph Smith, Jr., Frederick G. Williams, Sidney Rigdon, and Newel K. Whitney.

In this revelation the Lord states that Satan “cometh and taketh away light and truth, through disobedience, from the children of men, and because of the tradition of their fathers.” (D&C 93:39.) The “tradition of their fathers” refers, of course, to the bad examples and teachings of fathers.

We must remember this world is a telestial environment. Our children grow up in this environment. They are constantly exposed to television programs and movie entertainment which depict the most seamy and perverse side of life. They are baraged with slogans and advertising designed to induce them to practices

that rob them of spirituality. Even some textbooks and teaching aids used in our public school systems present theory and, in some instances, falsehood as truth.

Some fathers leave solely to the mother or to the school the responsibility of shaping a child's ideas and standards. Too often television and movie screens shape our children's values.

We should not assume that public schools always reinforce teachings given in the home concerning ethical and moral conduct. We have seen introduced into many school systems false ideas about the theory of man's development from lower forms of life, teachings that there are no absolute moral values, repudiation of all beliefs regarded as supernatural, permissiveness about sexual freedom that gives sanction to immoral behavior and "alternative life-styles" such as lesbianism, homosexuality, and other perverse practices.

Such teachings not only tend to undermine the faith and morals of our young people, but they deny the existence of God, who gave absolute laws, and the divinity of Jesus Christ. Surely we can see the moral contradiction of some who argue for the preservation of endangered species, but sanction the abortion of unborn humans.

There is a solution, and it is that the Lord expects great things from the fathers of Israel. Fathers must take time to find out what their children are being taught and then take steps to correct false information and teaching.

I know fathers who inquire of their children each evening to determine firsthand what their children are being taught in school and what needs to be corrected. Then, if necessary, they instruct them in what the Lord has revealed. This is application of the principle that "light and truth forsake that evil one." (D&C 93:37.)

The new consolidated Sunday

meeting schedule has been implemented to give fathers more time on the Sabbath to teach their children. This is a golden opportunity for families to study the scriptures and receive instruction from their parents. Blessed is the household that does this on a consistent basis.

What should we teach? The Lord has revealed the specific curriculum that parents should teach. Hear His words: "Teach . . . unto your children, that all men, everywhere, must repent, or they can in nowise inherit the kingdom of God, for no unclean thing can dwell there, or dwell in his presence." (Moses 6:57.)

As further noted in this revelation, the fundamental doctrines consist of the doctrine of the Fall, the mission of Christ and His atonement, and the first principles and ordinances of the gospel, which include faith in Christ, repentance, baptism for the remission of sins, and the gift of the Holy Ghost as the means to a sanctified life (see Moses 6:58-59).

Brethren, we are to teach the fundamental doctrines of the Church in such a way that our children may understand. Some fathers teach, but their children do not understand. This places responsibility on fathers to study and learn the gospel.

With few exceptions, righteous sons and daughters who have attained eternal blessings are not just physically begotten by their fathers. They are spiritually regenerated by the examples and teachings of their fathers.

Great fathers lead their children to Christ.

Set your household in order

Third, set in order your own household. Such was the Lord's counsel to fathers in early Church history, and such is His timely counsel to us today!

Setting your home in order is keeping the commandments of God.

This brings harmony and love in the home between you and your companion and between you and your children. It is daily family prayer. It is teaching your family to understand the gospel of Jesus Christ. It is each family member keeping the commandments of God. It is you and your companion being worthy to receive a temple recommend, all family members receiving the ordinances of exaltation, and your family being sealed together for eternity. It is being free from excessive debt, with family members paying honest tithes and offerings.

Fathers, are your homes in order?

In a revelation given to President John Taylor, the Lord directed this message to the priesthood: "I call upon the heads of families to put their houses in order according to the law of God, . . . and to purify themselves before me, and to purge out iniquity from their households. And I will bless and be with you, saith the Lord, and ye shall gather together in your holy places wherein ye assemble to call upon me, and ye shall ask for such things as are right, and I will hear your prayers, and my Spirit and power shall be with you, and my blessing shall rest upon you, upon your families, your dwellings and your households, upon your flocks and herds and fields, your orchards and vineyards, and upon all that pertains to you; and you shall be my people and I will be your God; . . . for my word shall go forth, and my work shall be accomplished, and my Zion shall be established." (*Revelation given through President John Taylor, at Salt Lake City, Utah Territory, October 13th, 1882, typeset ms. in Church Historical Department Archives, pp. 2-3.*)

Sacred title of "father"

Yes, these times require great things from fathers, and so does the

Lord. Three requirements are: create a home where love and the Spirit of the Lord may abide; bring up children in light and truth; and set your homes in order.

The sacred title of "father" is shared with the Almighty. In the Church men are called and released. Did you ever hear of a mortal father being released?

As I travel throughout the Church and see faithful families, I say, "Thank God for exemplary fathers and mothers." As I see faithful young people and am proud of their accomplishments, I say, "Thank God for diligent fathers and mothers."

Fatherhood is not a matter of station or wealth; it is a matter of desire, diligence, and determination to see one's family exalted in the celestial kingdom. If that prize is lost, nothing else really matters.

I know of one family who has as its goal that each member of the family and posterity will arrive in their heavenly home—the celestial kingdom—with no vacant chairs. That is their objective. They review it at every family reunion and mention it frequently as they mingle together between reunions.

God bless all the fathers in Israel to do well the work within the walls of our own homes. With the Lord's help we shall succeed in this, our most important responsibility. In the name of Jesus Christ, amen.

President Romney

President Ezra Taft Benson, President of the Council of the Twelve Apostles, has just addressed us.

We shall now hear from Bishop Victor L. Brown, Presiding Bishop of the Church. He will be followed by Elder David B. Haight, a member of the Council of the Twelve Apostles.

Bishop Victor L. Brown

Fast offerings

As I address this vast body of priesthood brethren tonight, I do so in humility and with a prayer in my heart. The two subjects I will discuss come by assignment. The introduction to my first subject is recorded in the Old Testament as spoken by the prophet Isaiah:

"Is not this the fast that I have chosen? to loose the bands of wickedness, to undo the heavy burdens, and to let the oppressed go free, and that ye break every yoke?"

"Is it not to deal thy bread to the hungry, and that thou bring the poor that are cast out to thy house? when thou seest the naked, that thou cover him; and that thou hide not thyself from thine own flesh?"

Four wonderful blessings are promised by the Lord to those who obey the law of the fast:

"Then shall thy light break forth as the morning, and thine health shall spring forth speedily; and thy righteousness shall go before thee; the glory of the Lord shall be thy reward.

"Then shalt thou call, and the Lord shall answer; thou shalt cry, and he shall say, Here I am.

"And if thou draw out thy soul to the hungry, and satisfy the afflicted soul; then shall thy light rise in obscurity, and thy darkness be as the noonday:

"And the Lord shall guide thee continually, and satisfy thy soul in drought, and make fat thy bones: and thou shalt be like a watered garden, and like a spring of water, whose waters fail not." (Isa. 58:6-11.)

Regarding this scripture, President Harold B. Lee had this to say:

"The tremendous blessings that come [from fasting] have been spelled out in every dispensation. . . . If you analyze . . . the 58th chapter of the book of Isaiah you will find unrav-

eled why the Lord wants us to pay fast offerings, why he wants us to fast. It's because by qualifying thus we can call and the Lord can answer. We can cry and the Lord will say, 'Here I am.' Do we ever want to be in a condition where we can call and he won't answer? We will cry in our distress and he won't be with us? I think it is time we are thinking about these fundamentals because these are the days that lie ahead, when we are going to need more and more the blessings of the Lord, when the judgments are poured out without mixture upon the whole earth." ("Listen and Obey," Welfare Agricultural Meeting, 3 April 1971, copy of typescript, p. 14; Church Historical Library.)

President J. Reuben Clark, Jr., had this to say: "The fundamental principle of all Church relief work is that it must be carried on by fast offerings and other voluntary donations and contributions. This is the order established by the Lord. Tithing is not primarily designed for that purpose and must not be used except in the last extremity." (As quoted by Marion G. Romney, "Our Primary Purpose," Welfare Agricultural Meeting, 3 April 1971, copy of typescript, p. 8; Church Historical Library.)

The Lord's financial law

Fast offering is the Lord's financial law given for the blessing of the poor. For many years it was understood that fast offerings should represent the cost of the two meals not eaten. This understanding came into being because, in the early days, members were generally asked to give the actual food saved by fasting. Conditions were so desperate that money would have been of little use. Later, the understanding seemed to

be that \$1 per capita would be adequate.

However, in recent years, President Kimball has said of the fast offering: "I think we should be very generous and give, instead of the amount we saved by our two meals of fasting, perhaps much, much more—ten times more where we are in a position to do it." (In Conference Report, Apr. 1974, p. 184.)

It is important to recognize that the fast offering is a freewill offering, the amount of which each individual is responsible to determine. It is not the same as tithing, which is 10 percent of our interest annually. The amount is left up to each individual, and yet a living prophet has said we should be very generous. Wouldn't it be wonderful if our faithfulness would generate fast offering funds sufficient to operate the entire storehouse system?

Perhaps the following scriptures will give us some guidance as to how generous we should be:

First, from the Doctrine and Covenants, section 42, beginning with verse 30. This is a revelation given to the Prophet Joseph Smith regarding the law of consecration:

"And behold, thou wilt remember the poor, and consecrate of thy properties for their support that which thou hast to impart unto them, with a covenant and a deed which cannot be broken.

"And inasmuch as ye impart of your substance unto the poor, ye will do it unto me; and they shall be laid before the bishop of my church and his counselors. . . .

"Therefore, the residue shall be kept in my storehouse, to administer to the poor and the needy." (D&C 42:30-31, 34.)

The Lord restates this principle many times, including section 70 of the Doctrine and Covenants, verse 7:

"Nevertheless, inasmuch as they receive more than is needful for their necessities and their wants, it shall

be given into my storehouse."

Further, you will recall when a certain ruler asked Jesus what he should do to inherit eternal life, the Savior responded:

"Thou knowest the commandments, Do not commit adultery, Do not kill, Do not steal, Do not bear false witness, Honour thy father and thy mother.

"And he said, All these have I kept from my youth up.

"Now when Jesus heard these things, he said unto him, Yet lackest thou one thing: sell all that thou hast, and distribute unto the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come, follow me.

"And when he heard this, he was very sorrowful: for he was very rich.

"And when Jesus saw that he was very sorrowful, he said, How hardly shall they that have riches enter into the kingdom of God!

"For it is easier for a camel to go through a needle's eye, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God." (Luke 18:20-25.)

Again, from the Doctrine and Covenants, we learn:

"For it is expedient that I, the Lord, should make every man accountable, as a steward over earthly blessings, which I have made and prepared for my creatures.

"I, the Lord, stretched out the heavens, and built the earth, my very handiwork; and all things therein are mine.

"But it must needs be done in mine own way; and behold this is the way that I, the Lord, have decreed to provide for my saints, that the poor shall be exalted, in that the rich are made low.

"For the earth is full, and there is enough and to spare; yea, I prepared all things, and have given unto the children of men to be agents unto themselves.

"Therefore, if any man shall take of the abundance which I have

made, and impart not his portion, according to the law of my gospel, unto the poor and the needy, he shall, with the wicked, lift up his eyes in hell, being in torment." (D&C 104:13-14, 16-18.)

Teach law of fast

May I conclude my remarks on fast offerings with portions of a letter I received several years ago from Elder John H. Groberg, who at that time was president of the Tongan Mission.

"Enclosed find a check for \$1,000 for excess fast offerings from the Tongan Mission. Normally this letter would end here, but because of an experience I recently had I would like to add a little more.

"As you may or may not be aware, Tonga is one of the poorest countries financially in the world. The average wage rate is only around 12¢ per hour if you are lucky enough to have a job. . . .

"Recently, while visiting one of the far distant islands that is very difficult to get to, I went late in the day to the home of one of the good widow sisters there.

"When I first approached her hut the sun was still quite bright and I could not help but notice the stark poverty of her surroundings. It had been raining earlier. The mud and decay and the ever-present smell of drying fish were at first repulsive. But the warmth of meeting with a fellow Church member—especially after years of separation—together with tears of appreciation for the long-awaited visit, soon pushed the unpleasantness of the surroundings temporarily into the background.

"As we conversed in her fluid native tongue and she told of her love for and faith in the Church and of all the blessings she had received, I could not help but think about her apparently miserable circumstances. . . . All sorts of ideas went

through my mind, and I must have let my thoughts wander as I suddenly became aware that somewhere between phrases about blessings and poverty and service she had gone to her hut and was now returning with a small knotted rag.

"Suddenly my mind seemed to fill with light, and the words 'fast offerings' flooded in. I was so excited with the idea that had come so suddenly and so clearly, that you can imagine my utter amazement and unpreparedness when she took a threepence (a coin worth about 3¢) from her rag and said softly, 'Here is my fast offering . . . to help the poor.'

"I wanted to explain that fast offering was to help her, not for her to help others. The explanation never came, for as I looked through misty eyes, first at the threepence then back at the good sister, the whole scene changed.

"The hut was a glowing mansion and the mud was gold. . . . The world seemed to stand still for a moment. All of nature seemed to stop and listen as from the heavens the whole universe seemed filled with the reassuring words: 'Blessed are the poor . . . for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.' (Matt. 5:3.)

"As the setting sun signaled the end of the day, so it also told of the approaching end of her beautiful life of service.

"I took the threepence, and as I write this check the whole experience once again fills my mind and I wonder, 'How many threepences to make a thousand dollars?' "

May I encourage all bishops present tonight to remember this wonderful Tongan widow as you teach the law of the fast and as you bless the poor by wisely and judiciously expending these sacred funds.

Evaluate stake and ward budgets

In the sweet glow of this experience, let me talk now with you about

stake and ward budgets. We are very concerned about the financial stress under which many of our people are laboring. Bishops, particularly, have the responsibility not to let programs become too expensive and thereby become a financial burden to the members.

It is all too easy for leaders to assume that others have discretionary income similar to their own. May I illustrate what I am talking about by quoting portions of a letter from a concerned mother:

"In September, it was making and selling pizzas three nights a week and Saturday mornings to raise money for volleyball uniforms. There were class parties, New Beginnings, leadership workshops, and ward service projects.

"In October and November it was volleyball practice and games three nights a week, a ward dinner, a Halloween party, a stake midweek fireside, and a barn dance.

"In January there have been basketball practices and games to start the sports program going again, a stake standards night, and a fund-raising project.

"In February, along with the basketball games, there have been roadshow rehearsals three days of the week, a skiing party, a snow party, a stake camp meeting, and a workshop to finish up the Sesquicentennial projects to take up at least twenty-two days of this month.

"I'm sure I need not go on and on with this word picture. But still there is more you should know about: Coming up is a 'slave auction,' a car wash, a doughnut sale, a singing telegram project, lawn raking every Saturday morning until summer to raise money for a super activity in Idaho. There's an Aaronic Priesthood outing for both the boys and girls in May, two Scout overnights besides Beehive camp and Scout camp."

We are sufficiently concerned, that Elder Gordon B. Hinckley ad-

ressed this subject last evening in a special joint meeting with Regional Representatives and stake presidents. May I quote just a sentence or two from his remarks: "I should like to say that sacrifice, where needed, is an important aspect of the gospel. It is of the very essence of true worship. But unnecessary sacrifice, that requested because of extravagance or poor management, is evil." You bishops should expect that your stake president will meet with you almost immediately upon returning from conference to evaluate both stake and ward budgets. The stake budget, of course, has an important impact on the ward budget.

There are some very specific areas which you should carefully evaluate.

1. Energy costs: Lights should be turned off when rooms are not in use. Air conditioning and heating should not be used unless absolutely necessary and particularly when the building or portions thereof are not in use.

2. Paid custodial services: Such services should be reviewed with an eye to using ward members on a rotation basis to take care of the grounds and the basic cleaning. Thus professional custodial hours could be reduced and their efforts concentrated on maintaining mechanical and other complex systems. On this particular item, written suggestions will be forthcoming very soon.

3. Welfare projects: Each project, through efficient management, should contribute to the commodity production budget to the maximum degree so as to reduce the need for cash contributions from the individual ward members to meet this commitment.

4. Activities: Current policy is that the yearly budget include all ward and stake activity funding and that there not be any fund raising going on in addition to the budget. Youth conferences or activities that

require expensive and extensive travel should be eliminated.

These are but a few of the ways of reducing the financial burden on the people.

Clearly we are preparing for the day when the higher law, that of consecration, will again become the financial law of the Church through which we will properly take care of the poor. Until that time, it is our responsibility and blessing—as a matter of fact, our covenant—to give generously from our surplus to bless the poor.

We stress the teaching of personal and family preparedness as the first principle of the welfare services program. It is, therefore, incumbent upon each stake president and bishop

to make sure that excessive financial demands are not made upon the people which will weaken their financial security and make it impossible for them to take care of their own needs.

May the Lord bless us to be wise and sound stewards in blessing the people with our teachings and our leadership, I pray in the name of Jesus Christ, amen.

President Romney

Bishop Victor L. Brown, Presiding Bishop of the Church, has just addressed us.

Elder David B. Haight, a member of the Council of the Twelve Apostles, will be our next speaker.

Elder David B. Haight

Scott Hall is an unusual young man. His father, Garth, is an assistant coach for the Brigham Young University football team.

Recently Scott asked his mother for a white shirt.

"But you have all of these other beautiful colored shirts. Why do you want a white shirt?" asked his mother.

"I just have to have a white shirt," he said.

"But why?" his mother asked.

Scott replied, "I can't be a missionary without a white shirt."

Scott is two years old.

Expansion of the Church

The story of the expansion of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints throughout the world not only is a miracle but is "as the stone . . . cut out of the mountain without hands [that] shall roll forth, until it has filled the whole earth." (See D&C 65:2.)

Recently a California family, driving through St. George, Utah, on vacation, was attracted by the unusual architecture of the St. George Temple. They walked around the building, admiring its beauty.

Having a little time to spare, the parents entered the information center; their two young children crossed the street to sit under the shade of a tree near our meetinghouse.

A teacher, calling the children in to Primary and seeing the two young visitors, said, "Come on in to Primary." They went in.

The parents, now finished at the information center, started looking for the children. After searching for nearly an hour, they saw them come out of the chapel.

The father said, "We've been looking all over for you. Where have you been?"

They replied, "We've been to Primary."

"Primary! What's Primary?"

"Primary is where you learn

about Jesus; and, besides, Daddy, you shouldn't be smoking!" Their father just about swallowed his cigar.

He remarked, "Let's get on our way. We're way behind schedule."

The children said, "We can't go."

"Can't go! Why not?"

"We are in a play."

"A play?" he asked.

"Yes," they replied, "and the play isn't until next week, and we have to stay all week for rehearsals."

The family stayed in St. George for a week!

The children rehearsed; the parents were taught the gospel; and the whole family was baptized.

The truth of our message—the impact of its spiritual influence upon hearts *previously prepared*—is the greatest influence for good in the world.

Senior Classman Kevin Scott was assigned to preside over a dining table of ten freshmen midshipmen at the United States Naval Academy. Seniors at the Naval Academy at Annapolis assist in training new midshipmen not only in tactics, but also in courtesy and discipline.

During the dinner Senior Scott requested that each midshipman give his full name, his hometown, and his state.

One of the freshmen answered, "Midshipman Ernest Ward Sax, sir, from Salt Lake City, Utah."

Senior Scott said, "Are you a Mormon?"

"Yes, sir."

"Does that mean you do not smoke or drink liquor or coffee?"

"Yes, sir."

"Do you have a copy of the Book of Mormon?"

"Yes, sir."

"Have you read it?" was the next question.

"Yes, sir."

"Will you loan it to me?" requested Scott.

"Yes, sir."

An unusual but friendly relationship developed, with an exchange of books and pamphlets between young Midshipman Sax of Salt Lake City and Senior Classman Scott of North Carolina.

Annapolis graduate Kevin Scott is now a Marine lieutenant in flight training in Florida. Newly baptized Kevin Scott is the ward mission leader, the "spark plug" of the ward missionary effort. He is now testifying to others about the restoration of the gospel and enthusiastically encouraging our members to spread the message.

Midshipman Ward Sax, now in his second year at Annapolis, is the son of a caring Mormon family, a young man who honored his priesthood responsibility.

Young generation of champions needed

As I look at a map of the world—its vastness, its billions of people—and ponder the responsibility our Lord has placed upon the young Aaronic Priesthood bearers, I marvel at how the Lord has placed each of you in families or special circumstances at this particular time.

America and every country in the world desperately need a young generation of champions—champions of truth, of honesty, of purity, of high moral standards, of faith in a living God.

Our Lord counseled us to "seek . . . first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all . . . things shall be added unto you." (Matt. 6:33.) As you study the scriptures, pray to understand them, and live in harmony with their inspired teachings, then you will grow in wisdom and strength.

You hold sacred priesthood keys, rights, and responsibilities. A troubled world is waiting to hear from you. What will you say? How

will you say it? Will the world know that you know for sure where you are going?

Paul taught his young friend Timothy, "For God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind." (2 Tim. 1:7.)

The Lord has placed in our hands the divine power and authority to act in all things, to preach the gospel and perform the ordinances of salvation by which men are sealed up into eternal life. You *are* different from the rest of the world.

While Joseph Smith was translating the Book of Mormon with Oliver Cowdery as the scribe, they went into the woods to pray and inquire of the Lord regarding baptism. While calling upon the Lord, "a messenger from heaven descended in a cloud of light" and laid his hands upon them and ordained them, saying:

"Upon you my fellow servants, in the name of Messiah, I confer the Priesthood of Aaron, which holds the keys of the ministering of angels, and of the gospel of repentance, and of baptism by immersion for the remission of sins." (JS-H 1:68-69.)

Joseph Smith received direction to baptize Oliver Cowdery and Oliver to baptize Joseph. Then the Aaronic Priesthood was conferred upon each.

The heavenly messenger "said that his name was . . . John the Baptist, . . . and that he acted under the direction of Peter, James and John, who held the keys of the Priesthood of Melchizedek, which . . . would in due time be conferred on" Joseph and Oliver. (See JS-H 1:72.)

You hold this same sacred authority to declare repentance, to baptize, to administer the sacrament, to assist the bishop, and to be concerned for those needing special encouragement.

Restoration through Joseph Smith

Our Lord has used young men your age in many miraculous ways.

Jesus taught and confounded the priests in the temple when only twelve.

David, the young shepherd boy, with complete faith in the Lord, met the Philistine giant, Goliath, on the battlefield. With a prayer in his heart and unafraid, David took a stone out of his bag and, whirling the sling around his head, flung the stone at Goliath, and it sank deep into his forehead. Goliath fell to the earth. A young boy's courage and faith in God had saved the Israelites. (See 1 Sam. 17.)

Joseph Smith at age fourteen read in James: "If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, . . . and it shall be given him." (James 1:5.) Later he said:

"Never did any passage of scripture come with more power to the heart of man. . . . It seemed to enter with great force into every feeling of my heart. . . .

"I retired to the woods. . . .

"I kneeled down and began to offer up the desire of my heart to God." (JS-H 2:12, 14-15.)

Thus began the events that led to the restoration of The Church of Jesus Christ when God the Father and His Son appeared to the boy, Joseph.

Values and truths are ageless

Beloved young friends, much of our future rests with you. You are needed—not to be weak, but to be strong. You can hold high the beacon of light in a darkened world as you testify of a living God.

You have our love and encouragement. We believe in you. We are not out of touch with you and your challenges. We have "walked in the same moccasins." We dated lovely girls and know that associations with them can be uplifting, wholesome, and a beautiful experience.

Live so your memories can bless the full length of your life. Live for

that glorious day when you will go to the holy temple for eternal blessings and joy. Resist the temptations and pressures of those who might urge you to stray, to use marijuana or beer or hard liquor. You understand how deadly they become to your body and then to your spirit. You must not succumb. You are different. Pornography, filthy literature and movies, vile language, and suggestive music are not part of your life. They can destroy you.

We know you are maturing in a world promoting a quest for fun, excitement, material possessions, immediate gratification, and an attitude of "do it now." Develop the strength to defer gratification—to understand there is a time and season for everything and a maturing process that is part of God's eternal plan.

We remind you of values and truths that are ageless and eternal—like "duty, truth, justice, and mercy." They "become the measure of decision. . . . The straight and righteous path is the shortest and the surest." (Walter Lippman, "The Fascination of Greatness," *New York Herald Tribune*, 7 Sept. 1943.)

Following the sensational Brigham Young University basketball victory over Notre Dame, Danny Ainge's father was asked if his son might break his professional baseball contract for a better offer in basketball. His father replied, "Danny has a contract. Honor and integrity are more important than money."

Jesus taught, "For what shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?" (Mark 8:36.)

Your character is yours alone to build. No one can injure your character but you.

Life is a competition not with others, but with ourselves. We should seek each day to live stronger, better, truer lives; each day to master some weakness of yesterday;

each day to repair a mistake; each day to surpass ourselves.

Elder Howard W. Hunter's grandson attended tithing settlement with his father some time ago. The bishop indicated his pleasure in the young lad's wanting to pay a full tithing and asked him if he thought the gospel was true. This seven-year-old boy, having paid his full tithe of fourteen cents, said he guessed the gospel was true, "but it sure costs a lot of money."

We learn in our youth to pay an honest tithing. The Lord requires one-tenth of what we earn. If you work as a bagger in a grocery store, the money you are paid for every tenth bag of groceries you carry out to a car belongs to the Lord. Pay your tithing monthly or weekly as you are paid. Never be in debt to the Lord. Spiritual and temporal blessings will be yours as you carefully honor this commandment.

A learning experience

Football came to our country town later than most. The school board had neither the money for equipment nor a coach. Then the great day arrived. Our high school principal was able to buy twelve inexpensive football outfits, except the expensive cleated football shoes (we used our basketball shoes), and our coach was recruited from the faculty because he had witnessed a game.

We learned a few simple plays, how to tackle—or so we thought—and set off for our first game with Twin Falls, the previous year's Idaho state champions.

We dressed and went out on the field to warm up. Their school band started to play (they had more students in the band than we had in our entire high school), and then through the gates came their team. The twelve of us—a full team of eleven plus one all-round substitute—watched in amazement as they kept

coming through the gates—all thirty-nine of them in full uniform.

The game was most interesting! To say it was a learning experience is rather mild. After two plays we didn't have any desire to have the ball—so we would kick it, and soon they would score. When they got the ball, they would run a baffling play and score. Our problem was to get rid of the ball—it was less punishing.

In the final minutes of the game they became a little reckless. A wild pass fell into the arms of Clifford Lee, who was playing halfback with me. He was startled, not knowing for sure what to do—until he saw the "Dallas Cowboys" thundering after him. Then he knew what to do. He was fast. He wasn't running for points, but for his life! Clifford made a touchdown; six points went up on the board. The final score—106 to 6! We really didn't deserve the six points, but with our torn shirts and socks and our bruises, we took them anyway.

A learning experience? Of course! An individual or a team must be prepared. In all things success depends upon previous preparation.

A new world opened

My father was our bishop, but he died before I received the priesthood. I remember so clearly being ordained a deacon. A new world opened up for me. I was now living on a higher plane. As I would hear people say, "You hold the priesthood," it was not easy to fully comprehend. But with humble teachers, we began to understand that as dea-

cons we had been given blessings and authority to do sacred things.

As quorum officers we accounted for all of our members and would see that they were all at church. We enjoyed being together. We chopped wood for the elderly and the widows, filled the coal bins at church, cleaned the meetinghouse every Saturday afternoon, swept the steps, raked the gravel yard, saw that the sacrament trays and lace sacrament cloths were clean and fresh, and had real pride in the appearance of our little meetinghouse.

We were part of the Church and the Church was part of us. We knew it; we felt it! We held the priesthood of God! Understanding teachers guided us and helped us broaden our vision and our ever-expanding role as young men; but more important, they helped prepare us to be called in our youth to be servants of our Savior. He needs every one of you young men who hold the priesthood. I testify that this work is true. I do it humbly, in the holy name of Jesus Christ, amen.

President Romney

Elder David B. Haight, a member of the Council of the Twelve Apostles, has just spoken to us.

The choir and congregation will now join in singing "Rejoice, the Lord Is King."

The choir and congregation sang "Rejoice, the Lord Is King."

President Marion G. Romney

Gospel covenants

In our priesthood meeting last October we considered "The Oath

and Covenant Which Belongeth to the Priesthood." (See *Ensign*, Nov. 1980, pp.43-45.) Tonight I have in mind calling attention to some spe-

cific gospel covenants which every priesthood bearer should honor.

In saying to William E. M'Lellin, "Blessed are you for receiving mine everlasting covenant, even the fulness of my gospel" (D&C 66:2), the Lord identified the gospel as the great and all-embracing covenant. As a matter of fact, the Lord had himself presented it as such to us, his spirit children, in the great pre-earth Council in Heaven. Standing among us at that time in that premortal assembly, the Lord "said unto those who were with him: We will go down . . . and . . . make an earth whereon these may dwell;

"And we will prove them herewith, to see if they will do all things whatsoever the Lord their God shall command them;

"And they who keep their first estate shall be added upon; and they who keep not their first estate shall not have glory in the same kingdom with those who keep their first estate; and they who keep their second estate shall have glory added upon their heads for ever and ever." (Abr. 3:24-26.)

In that council, a third of the spirits rejected the gospel covenant.

All who obtain the promised reward that "they who keep their second estate shall have glory added upon their heads for ever and ever" must accept and comply with gospel covenants.

With Abraham, the Lord entered into a special covenant when he said:

"I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee above measure, and make thy name great among all nations, and thou shalt be a blessing unto thy seed after thee, that in their hands they shall bear this ministry and Priesthood unto all nations;

"And I will bless them through thy name; for as many as receive this Gospel shall be called after thy name, and shall be accounted thy seed, and shall rise up and bless

thee, as their father;

"And I will bless them that bless thee, and curse them that curse thee; and in thee . . . and in thy seed . . . shall all the families of the earth be blessed, even with the blessings of the Gospel, which are the blessings of salvation, even of life eternal." (Abr. 2:9-11.)

Abraham's posterity, through Isaac and Jacob—with whom these covenants were renewed—have ever since been known by those who have understood the gospel as "children of the covenant."

Baptismal covenant

The first gospel covenant we mortals enter into with the Lord is the baptismal covenant. Alma thus set forth the nature of this covenant when he and others who believed the teachings of Abinadi fled into the wilderness to the "place . . . [called] Mormon."

There he (Alma) "said unto them: Behold, here are the waters of Mormon . . . and now, as ye are desirous to come into the fold of God, and to be called his people, and are willing to bear one another's burdens, . . .

"And are willing to mourn with those that mourn; . . . and comfort those that stand in need of comfort, and to stand as witnesses of God at all times and in all things, and in all places . . . even until death, that ye may be redeemed of God, . . . that ye may have eternal life—

"What have you against being baptized in the name of the Lord, as a witness before him that ye have entered into a covenant with him, that ye will serve him and keep his commandments, that he may pour out his Spirit more abundantly upon you?" (Mosiah 18:7-10.)

In this dispensation, the Lord has stated for us the terms of the baptismal covenant in the Doctrine and Covenants, section 20, verse 37, as follows:

"And again, by way of commandment to the church concerning the manner of baptism—All those who humble themselves before God, and desire to be baptized, and come forth with broken hearts and contrite spirits, and witness before the church that they have truly repented of all their sins, and are willing to take upon them the name of Jesus Christ, having a determination to serve him to the end, and truly manifest by their works that they have received of the Spirit of Christ unto the remission of their sins, shall be received by baptism into his church."

Sacraments on holy day

Another instruction the Lord has given us is:

"That thou mayest more fully keep thyself unspotted from the world, thou shalt go to the house of prayer and offer up thy sacraments upon my holy day." (D&C 59:9.)

The sacrament prayers—dictated by the Lord himself—should keep us constantly reminded of the gospel covenants we have entered into with the Lord. These prayers are much alike. The one on the bread reads:

"O God, the Eternal Father, we ask thee in the name of thy Son, Jesus Christ, to bless and sanctify this bread to the souls of all those who partake of it, that they may eat in remembrance of the body of thy Son, and witness unto thee, O God, the Eternal Father, that they are willing to take upon them the name of thy Son, and always remember him and keep his commandments which he has given them; that they may always have his Spirit to be with them. Amen." (D&C 20:77.)

Tithing

Many of the Lord's commandments are in the form of covenants promising specific blessings—tithing, for example: "Behold, now it is

called today until the coming of the Son of Man, and verily it is a day of sacrifice, and a day for the tithing of my people; for he that is tithed shall not be burned at his coming." (D&C 64:23.)

"And I say unto you, if my people observe not this law [of tithing], to keep it holy, and by this law sanctify the land of Zion unto me, . . . it shall not be a land of Zion unto you." (D&C 119:6.)

These statements make it clear that by failing to honor the tithing covenant one forfeits great blessings. On the other hand, complying with it assures great blessings.

"Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse . . . and prove me now herewith, saith the Lord of hosts, if I will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it."

"And I will rebuke the devourer for your sakes, and he shall not destroy the fruits of your ground; neither shall your vine cast her fruit before the time in the field, saith the Lord of hosts." (Mal. 3:10-11.)

Word of Wisdom

Another example of a covenant is the Word of Wisdom, which also promises a specific blessing.

"Behold, verily, thus saith the Lord unto you: In consequence of evils and designs which do and will exist in the hearts of conspiring men in the last days, I have warned you, and forewarn you, by giving unto you this word of wisdom by revelation—

"That inasmuch as any man drinketh wine or strong drink among you, behold it is not good, neither meet in the sight of your Father. . . .

"And, again, strong drinks are not for the belly, but for the washing of your bodies."

"And again, tobacco is not for the body, neither for the belly, and is

not good for man, but is an herb for bruises and all sick cattle, to be used with judgment and skill.

"And again, hot drinks are not for the body or belly. . . .

"And all saints who remember to keep and do these sayings, walking in obedience to the commandments, shall receive health in their navel and marrow to their bones;

"And shall find wisdom and great treasures of knowledge, even hidden treasures;

"And shall run and not be weary, and shall walk and not faint.

"And I, the Lord, give unto them a promise, that the destroying angel shall pass by them, as the children of Israel, and not slay them." (D&C 89:4-5, 7-9, 18-21.)

Covenants essential to exaltation

You will remember that it was necessary for the "destroying angel" referred to in this scripture to fatally afflict the firstborn of men and beast throughout Egypt in order to persuade Pharaoh to let Israel go.

Destroying angels are mentioned several times in modern scriptures. Two years before the Word of Wisdom promise was given, the Lord said that "the angels [were] waiting the great command to reap down the earth, to gather the tares that they may be burned." (D&C 38:12.)

Observing the gospel covenants we make with the Lord qualifies us

to enter the temple and there receive the ordinances and covenants essential to exaltation, including the new and everlasting covenant of celestial marriage.

That the Lord will help all of us to magnify our callings in the priesthood by proving faithful to every covenant and commandment and obligation which rests upon us, the holders of the holy priesthood, I humbly pray, in the name of Jesus Christ, amen.

President Romney

President Spencer W. Kimball, our beloved leader, will be our concluding speaker.

Before President Kimball speaks, we note that the nationwide CBS Radio Tabernacle Choir broadcast will be from 9:30 to 10:00 o'clock Sunday morning. Those desiring to attend must be in their seats before 9:15 A.M.

As we leave this priesthood meeting tonight, we remind you to obey traffic rules, to use caution, and to be courteous in driving.

The beautiful music for this priesthood session has been furnished by the Tabernacle Choir and Mormon Youth Chorus combined men's choir. We are grateful to you men for your inspiring music and express sincere thanks for the service you have given us tonight.

President Spencer W. Kimball

Church—a support to family

My dear brethren, I greet you as you are assembled here in the Salt Lake Tabernacle and in hundreds of other meeting places around the world. We are so pleased with the able leadership provided by the priesthood bearers of the Church—at all levels! As we magnify our priesthood

callings, I hope we will always remember that the Church is a support to the family. The Church does not and must not seek to displace the family, but is organized to help create and nurture righteous families as well as righteous individuals.

In this connection, brethren, we hope you will be mindful of your own needs and preserve some of that

precious time for your own wives and families. Be mindful, too, of your associates in the work of the Church, so that time is not taken unnecessarily from them and their families.

Avoid the tendency to crowd too many meetings in on the Sabbath day. When holding your regular meetings, make them as spiritual and effective as possible. Meetings need not be hurried nor rushed, for they can be planned in a manner that permits their sacred purposes to be accomplished without difficulty.

The consolidated meeting schedule was implemented largely in order to provide several more Sabbath hours for families. Therefore, take time to be together as families to converse with one another, to study the scriptures, to visit friends, relatives, and the sick and lonely. This is also an excellent time to work on your journals and genealogy.

Do not neglect those among us who do not now have the blessings of living in traditional families. These are special souls who often have special needs. Do not let them become isolated from you or the activities of your ward or your branch.

Strengthen teaching in the Church

My dear brethren, especially those of you who preside over stakes, wards, or branches, I should like to reiterate a plea I made to you in the October 1980 priesthood meeting.

Please take a particular interest in strengthening and improving the quality of teaching in the Church. The Savior charged us with feeding his sheep. (See John 21:15-17.) I fear at times that all too often many of our members come to church, sit through a class or meeting, and then return home having been largely uninformed. It is especially unfortunate if this happens at a time when they may be entering a period of

stress, temptation, or personal or family crisis. We all need to be touched and nurtured by the Spirit, and effective teaching is one of the most important ways this can happen. We regularly do vigorous enlistment and reactivation work to get members to come to church, but often do not watch over what they receive when they do attend.

Render service to others

Brethren, as you may remember, while speaking this morning I referred to our recent visit to the Caribbean Islands and the wonderful missionary work that has been accomplished in the two short years since we opened up those islands for the preaching of the gospel.

One incident occurred in Santo Domingo that I did not have time to tell you about. I think I should like to relate it to you now.

We held an evening general meeting in Santo Domingo, the capital city of the Dominican Republic. Nearly 1600 souls were present.

About an hour after the close of the general meeting, a busload of one hundred members from the Puerto Plata Branch arrived at the meeting place. They had been delayed because their bus broke down. Under ordinary circumstances, they could have made the trip in about four hours, but they finally arrived after 10:00 P.M. to find the hall dark and empty. Many wept because they were so disappointed. All were converts, some for a few months and others only weeks or days.

Sister Kimball and I had gone to bed after a long and tiring day. Upon learning of the plight of these faithful souls, my secretary knocked on the door of our hotel room and woke us up. He apologized for disturbing us but thought that I would want to know about the late arrivals and perhaps dictate a personal message to them. However, I felt that wouldn't

be good enough and not fair to those who had come so far under such trying circumstances—one hundred people jammed into one bus. I got out of bed and dressed and went downstairs to see the members who had made such an effort only to be disappointed because of engine trouble. The Saints were still weeping as we entered the hall, so I spent more than an hour visiting with them.

They then seemed relieved and satisfied and got back on the bus for the long ride home. They had to get back by morning to go to work and to school. Those good people seemed so appreciative of a brief visit together that I felt we just couldn't let them down. As I returned to my bed, I did so with a sense of peace and contentment in my soul.

Brethren, we all have opportunities to render service to others. That is our calling and our privilege. In serving the needs of others, we are mindful of the words of the Savior: "Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me." (Matt. 25:40.)

Husband resources

Brethren, may we counsel you on another matter close to all of us? As we seek contributions from our Saints for tithes and fast offerings, let us speak, more often than we sometimes do, in terms of blessings which will flow to us as we keep the commandments and do our duty. From time to time, we hear reports of unwarranted pressures which accompany the financial requests made of our Church members.

This is a matter of grave importance. In these days of inflation and emotional and political unrest, our people everywhere are being met with difficult and trying experiences on almost every hand. Prudence and

wisdom not only suggest but dictate that we take some steps to retrench and husband our resources. We must not overburden our people. With this in mind, the First Presidency has prepared a letter which was released yesterday in which we set out the concerns of the First Presidency and the Quorum of the Twelve relating to the increasing financial burdens on members of the Church, in addition to their payment of tithing and fast offerings. With our letter, we prepared some guidelines to assist ward, stake, and mission leaders in complying with the counsel and direction given. We have instructed the Regional Representatives of the Twelve to give this matter immediate attention and implementation.

Live within own means

Let us as individuals, as families, and as wards and stakes learn to live within our means. There is strength and salvation in this principle. Someone has said that we are rich in proportion to that with which we can do without. As families and as a Church, we can and should provide that which is *truly essential* for our people, but we must be careful not to extend beyond that which is essential or for purposes which are not directly related to our families' welfare and the basic mission of the Church.

I love you, my brethren, young and old, and I am grateful for your faith and your devotion to the cause of the Master. I express my affection for you and leave my blessing with you. And I pray our Heavenly Father to bless you and your families, your homes, and your work. God bless you, peace be with you, in the name of Jesus Christ, amen.

President Romney

The choir will close this meeting by singing "Swell the Full Chorus,"

following which Elder A. Theodore Tuttle, a member of the First Quorum of the Seventy, will offer the benediction.

The choir sang "Swell the Full Chorus."

Elder A. Theodore Tuttle gave the benediction.

SECOND DAY MORNING MEETING

FOURTH SESSION

The fourth session of the general conference commenced at 10:00 A.M. on Sunday, April 5, 1981. President Spencer W. Kimball presided at and conducted this session.

The Tabernacle Choir provided the music for this session with Jerold Ottley directing and John Longhurst at the organ.

Prior to the opening of the session, the Choir sang "Come, O Thou King of Kings" without announcement.

President Kimball made the following remarks:

President Spencer W. Kimball

We welcome all who are present this morning in the Salt Lake Tabernacle on Temple Square in this, the fourth session of the 151st Annual General Conference of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. We also acknowledge those tuned to this conference by radio and television and those who are seated in the overflow congregation in the Salt Palace where Elders Adney Y. Komatsu and Robert E. Wells preside.

We acknowledge the presence this morning of government, education, and civic leaders, and officers

and members of the Church from many lands who have assembled to worship and to counsel together in this conference.

The Tabernacle Choir under the direction of Jerold Ottley with John Longhurst at the organ is providing the music for this session. The Choir opened these services by singing "Come, O Thou King of Kings" and will now sing "Sweet Is the Work, My God, My King," following which Elder Dean L. Larsen, a member of the Presidency of the First Quorum of the Seventy, will offer the invocation.

The Tabernacle Choir sang "Sweet Is the Work, My God, My King."

Elder Dean L. Larsen offered the invocation.

The Choir sang "Father, Thy Children to Thee Now Raise" without announcement.

President Kimball

The Tabernacle Choir has sung "Father, Thy Children to Thee Now Raise." It will now be our privilege to hear from Elder Thomas S. Monson, a member of the Council of the Twelve Apostles.

Elder Thomas S. Monson

Today I desire to preach no sermon nor deliver a formal message. Rather, may I simply share with you my innermost thoughts. President David O. McKay referred to such as "heart petals." I open to your view a window to my soul.

Concern for the widow

The Epistle of James has long been a favorite book of the Holy Bible. I find his brief message heart-warming and filled with life. Each of us can quote that well-known passage, "If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him." (James 1:5.) How many of us, however, remember his definition of religion? "Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this, To visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world." (James 1:27.)

The word *widow* appears to have had a most significant meaning to our Lord. He cautioned His disciples to beware the example of the scribes, who feigned righteousness by their long apparel and their lengthy prayers, but who devoured the houses of widows. (See Mark 12:38, 40.)

To the Nephites came the direct warning, "I will come near to you to judgment; and I will be a swift witness against . . . those that oppress the . . . widow." (3 Ne. 24:5.)

To the Prophet Joseph Smith He directed, "The storehouse shall be kept by the consecrations of the church; and widows and orphans shall be provided for, as also the poor." (D&C 83:6.)

Such teachings were not new then. They are not new now. Consistently the Master has taught, by example, His concern for the widow.

To the grieving widow at Nain, bereft of her only son, He came personally and to the dead son restored the breath of life—and to the astonished widow her son. To the widow at Zarephath, who with her son faced imminent starvation, He sent the prophet Elijah with the power to teach faith as well as provide food.

We may say to ourselves, "But that was long ago and ever so far away." I respond: "Is there a city called Zarephath near your home? Is there a town known as Nain?" We may know our cities as Columbus or Coalville, Detroit or Denver. Whatever the name, there lives within each city the widow deprived of her companion and often her child. The need is the same. The affliction is real.

The widow's home is generally not large or ornate. Frequently it is modest in size and humble in appearance. Often it is tucked away at the top of the stairs or the back of the hallway and consists of but one room. To such homes He sends you and me.

There may exist an actual need for food, clothing—even shelter. Such can be supplied. Almost always there remains the hope for that special hyacinth to feed the soul.

*Go visit the lonely, the dreary;
Go comfort the weeping, the weary.
Oh, scatter kind deeds on your way
And make the world brighter today.*

"Long Line of the Lonely"

The ranks of those in special need grow larger day by day. Note the obituary page of your newspaper. Here the drama of life unfolds to our view. Death comes to all mankind. It comes to the aged as they walk on faltering feet. Its summons are heard by those who have scarcely reached midway in life's journey, and it often

hushes the laughter of little children.

After the funeral flowers fade, the well wishes of friends become memories, the prayers offered and words spoken dim in the corridors of the mind. Those who grieve frequently join that vast throng I shall entitle "The Long Line of the Lonely." Missed is the laughter of children, the commotion of teenagers, and the tender, loving concern of a departed companion. The clock ticks more loudly, time passes more slowly, and four walls do indeed a prison make.

Hopefully, all of us may again hear the echo of words spoken by the Master: "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these. . . , ye have done it unto me." (Matt. 25:40.)

As we resolve to minister more diligently to those in need, let us remember to include our children in these learning lessons of life.

I have many memories of my boyhood days. Anticipating Sunday dinner was one of them. Just as we children hovered at our so-called starvation level and sat anxiously at the table with the aroma of roast beef filling the room, mother would say to me, "Tommy, before we eat, take this plate I've prepared down the street to Old Bob and hurry back."

I could never understand why we couldn't first eat and later deliver his plate of food. I never questioned aloud but would run down to his house and then wait anxiously as Bob's aged feet brought him eventually to the door. Then I would hand him the plate of food. He would present to me the clean plate from the previous Sunday and offer me a dime as pay for my services. My answer was always the same: "I can't accept the money. My mother would tan my hide." He would then run his wrinkled hand through my blond hair and say, "My boy, you have a wonderful mother. Tell her thank you."

You know, I think I never did tell her. I sort of felt mother didn't need to be told. She seemed to sense his gratitude. I remember, too, that Sunday dinner always seemed to taste a bit better after I had returned from my errand.

Old Bob came into our lives in an interesting way. He was a widower in his eighties when the house in which he was living was to be demolished. I heard him tell my grandfather his plight as the three of us sat on the old front porch swing. With a plaintive voice, he said to grandfather, "Mr. Condie, I don't know what to do. I have no family. I have no place to go. I have no money." I wondered how grandfather would answer. Slowly grandfather reached into his pocket and took from it that old leather purse from which, in response to my hounding, he had produced many a penny or nickel for a special treat. This time he removed a key and handed it to Old Bob. Tenderly he said, "Bob, here is the key to that house I own next door. Take it. Move in your things. Stay as long as you like. There will be no rent to pay and nobody will ever put you out again."

Tears welled up in the eyes of Old Bob, coursed down his cheeks, then disappeared in his long, white beard. Grandfather's eyes were also moist. I spoke no word, but that day my grandfather stood ten feet tall. I was proud to bear his given name. Though I was but a boy, that lesson has influenced my life.

Let's make a call or two

Each of us has his own way of remembering. At Christmas time I take delight in visiting the widows and widowers from the ward where I served as bishop. There were eighty-seven then—just nine today. On such visits, I never know what to expect; but this I do know: visits like these provide for me the Christmas spirit,

which is, in reality, the Spirit of Christ.

Come with me, and we'll together make a call or two. There's the nursing home on West Temple where four widows reside. You never walk up the pathway but what you notice the parted curtain, as one inside waits hour after hour for the approaching step of a friend. What a welcome! Good times are remembered, perhaps a gift given, a blessing provided; but then it is time to leave. Never could I depart without first responding to the request of a widow almost one hundred years of age. Though she was blind, she would say, "Bishop, you're to speak at my funeral and recite from memory Tennyson's poem, 'Crossing the Bar.' Let's hear you do it right now!" I would proceed:

*Sunset and evening star,
And one clear call for me!
And may there be no moaning of the bar,
When I put out to sea, . . .*

*Twilight and evening bell,
And after that the dark!
And may there be no sadness of farewell,
When I embark;*

*For tho' from out our bourne of
Time and Place
The flood may bear me far,
I hope to see my Pilot face to face
When I have crost the bar.*

(In *Major British Writers*, ed. G. B. Harrison, enl. ed., New York: Harcourt, Brace & World, 1959, 2:466.)

Tears came easily, and then, with a smile, she would say, "Tommy, that was pretty good, but see that you do it a wee bit better at the funeral!" I later honored her request.

At another nursing home on First South, we might interrupt, as I

did a few years ago, a professional football game. There, before the TV, were seated two widows. They were warmly and beautifully dressed, absorbed in the game. I asked, "Who's winning?" They responded, "We don't even know who's playing, but at least it's company." I sat between those two angels and explained the game of football. I enjoyed the best contest I can remember. I may have missed a meeting, but I harvested a memory.

Let's hurry along to Redwood Road. There is a much larger home here where many widows reside. Most are seated in the well-lighted living room. But in her bedroom, alone, is one on whom I must call. She hasn't spoken a word since a devastating stroke some years ago. But then, who knows what she hears?—so I speak of good times together. There isn't a flicker of recognition, not a word spoken. In fact, an attendant asks if I am aware that this patient hasn't uttered a word for years. It made no difference. Not only had I enjoyed my one-sided conversation with her—I had communed with God.

"Reconsidered and approved"

When our beloved President Spencer W. Kimball met recently with those from a country where want is present, he asked not regarding statistics, but rather inquired: "Do our people have enough to eat? Are the widows cared for?" He was concerned.

During the administration of President George Albert Smith, there lived in our ward an impoverished widow who cared for her three mature daughters, each of whom was an invalid. They were large in size and almost totally helpless. To this dear woman fell the task to bathe, to feed, to dress, and to care for her girls. Means were limited. Outside help was nonexistent. Then came the blow

that the house she rented was to be sold. What was she to do? Where would she go? The bishop came to the Church Office Building to inquire if there were some way the house could be purchased. It was so small, the price so reasonable. The request was considered, then denied.

A heartsick bishop was leaving the front door of the building when he met President George Albert Smith. After the exchange of greetings, President Smith inquired, "What brings you to the headquarters building?" He listened carefully as the bishop explained, but said nothing. He then excused himself for a few minutes. He returned wearing a smile and directed, "Go upstairs to the fourth floor. A check is waiting there for you. Buy the house!"

"But the request was denied."

Again he smiled and said, "It has just been reconsidered and approved." The home was purchased. That dear widow lived there and cared for her daughters until each of them had passed away. Then she, too, went home to God and to her heavenly reward.

Mindful of the widowed and lonely

The leadership of this Church is mindful of the widow, the widower, the lonely. Can we be less concerned? Emerson counseled that rings and jewels are not gifts, but sub-

stitutes for gifts. The only real gift is a portion of oneself. (See "Gifts," by Ralph Waldo Emerson.)

We remember that during the meridian of time a bright, particular star shone in the heavens. Wise men followed it and found the Christ child. Today wise men still look heavenward and again see a bright, particular star. It will guide you and me to our opportunities. The burden of the downtrodden will be lifted, the cry of the hungry stilled, the lonely heart comforted. And souls will be saved—yours, theirs, and mine.

If we truly listen, we may hear that voice from far away say to us, as it spoke to another, "Well done, thou good and faithful servant." (Matt. 25:21.)

May we see that special star, may we hear that same salutation, is my humble prayer, in the name of Jesus Christ, amen.

The Choir sang "Home's Bright Love" without announcement.

President Kimball

We have heard from Elder Thomas S. Monson, a member of the Council of the Twelve Apostles, followed by the Tabernacle Choir singing "Home's Bright Love."

We shall now be pleased to hear from President N. Eldon Tanner, First Counselor in the First Presidency.

President N. Eldon Tanner

I am so glad to be here with you today and to hear this wonderful music and these sermons that have been taught. I am so thankful to you people who have thought of me in your prayers that I would regain my health, and I am thankful that I am able to participate with you today.

Belief in God and his Son

I have been thinking lately of the first and third articles of faith: "We believe in God, the Eternal Father, and in His son, Jesus Christ, and in the Holy Ghost," and "We believe that through the Atonement

of Christ, all mankind may be saved, by obedience to the laws and ordinances of the Gospel."

As I think of that first article of faith, do we really believe in God and in his Son, Jesus Christ, and in the Holy Ghost? And to what extent do they influence our lives? We believe that through the atonement of Christ all mankind may be saved. As I think about that, I want you to know how God, the Father, and his Son, Jesus Christ, have helped me through my life.

I am sure that my mother, being the kind of woman she was, thanked God when I was born for the blessing of being a co-partner with God in bringing this spirit child into the mortal world. I am sure she expressed her thanks to God through his Son, Jesus Christ.

In my home, prayers were offered on many different occasions. When I was taught to pray, I learned that I was actually talking to God, in the name of Jesus Christ, through the power of the Holy Ghost. When I was eight years old, I was taken by my father to be baptized. I had been told that I was a son of God, a child of God, and that he was interested in me, that he knew me and knew best what was right for me. We were taught to pray at meals; we were taught to pray in the morning; we were taught to pray at night. And we were taught that our Father in Heaven was the one to whom we were talking.

I wonder how many of us know that we are spirit children of God; and when we are praying, whether it's over a meal, beginning or closing of a meeting, or at a baptism or confirmation, or the blessing of the bread and water in the sacrament, that we are actually talking to God. He is there, he hears our prayers, and he blesses us.

The Father and the Son appeared to Joseph Smith

But the one prayer which impressed me was when Joseph Smith went into the woods to pray. He had read, "If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, . . . and it shall be given." If *any of you* lack wisdom, ask of God and you will receive your answer. Pray with faith, not wavering. "For he that wavereth is like a wave of the sea driven with the wind and tossed." (James 1:6.)

God the Father and his Son, Jesus Christ, appeared to Joseph—actually appeared to him—and told him they had a work for him to do. He had talked to God; God heard his prayers; his prayers were answered. And I bear testimony to you this morning that these things which I have expressed to you are true. This is the Church of Jesus Christ, under the direction of Christ himself through a prophet of God whom I love, admire, and appreciate.

Be an example

I love you people out there and humbly pray we may always realize that when we pray to God we are talking to him, and that he is interested in our welfare. The prayer that I pray at this time is that we will all realize who we are and act accordingly and be an example to people in the world. This is the Church of Jesus Christ; and he will hear all who ask, to help them understand who they are and why they are here. This is my prayer in the name of Jesus Christ, amen.

The Choir sang "But the Lord Is Mindful of His Own" without announcement.

President Kimball

We have just heard from President N. Eldon Tanner, First Counselor in the First Presidency. We are very grateful to have President Tanner back with us.

The Tabernacle Choir just sang "But the Lord Is Mindful of His Own."

We shall now be pleased to hear from Elder Franklin D. Richards, a member of the Presidency of the First Quorum of the Seventy.

Elder Franklin D. Richards

President Kimball, I express the feelings of the people of this worldwide Church in saying that we love you, President Tanner, President Romney, and are grateful that the Lord has performed miracles in your lives so that you can continue to carry on the great work of building the kingdom of God.

Eternal progression

We are living in a remarkable age—the dispensation of the fulness of times—but we are living in a troubled world. The powers of evil are visible in false doctrines, corrupt morals, strife, contention, and persecution. Fears abound in the hearts of many.

A universal question in the hearts and minds of men and women in all parts of the world is, "What is the purpose of life?"

The restored gospel of Jesus Christ answers this question. In modern revelation the Lord has told us, "If you keep my commandments and endure to the end you shall have eternal life, which gift is the greatest of all the gifts of God." (D&C 14:7.)

Therefore, in essence the purpose of life is to prepare us for the greatest gift of God, eternal life.

The restored gospel explains that we existed as spirit entities before being born into this sphere of activity—yes, spirit children of our Father in Heaven. We came to this earth for our spirits to receive bodies of flesh

and bones and to receive experiences wherein we are proved and tested to see, as the scripture states, if we "will do all things whatsoever the Lord . . . shall command." (Abr. 3:25.)

The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints teaches the value of eternal progression. We progressed in the premortal existence, and we have the opportunity to progress in this estate and throughout all eternity. Each of us is endowed with gifts and talents, and through study, prayer, proper work habits, and the use of our gifts and talents, we can accomplish our eternal objectives.

"Seek learning"

Study, particularly of the scriptures, is an important factor. We are counseled to "seek learning, even by study and also by faith." (D&C 88:118.) Eternal progress involves continual study. The Lord has told us that "the glory of God is intelligence, or, in other words, light and truth." (D&C 93:36.)

Also, "Whatever principle of intelligence we attain unto in this life, it will rise with us in the resurrection.

"And if a person gains more knowledge and intelligence in this life through his diligence and obedience than another, he will have so much the advantage in the world to come." (D&C 130:18-19.)

President Spencer W. Kimball has counseled us in this manner:

"Let us . . . seek to read and understand and apply the principles and inspired counsel found within the [scriptures]. If we do so, we shall discover that our personal *acts* of righteousness will also bring *personal revelation or inspiration* when needed into our own lives." (EN-SIGN, Sept. 1975, p. 4.)

An abundance of modern revelation is to be found in latter-day scriptures. These scriptures explain in detail how to meet today's challenges. Knowledge received from studying the scriptures assists us in making correct decisions in all areas of life's activities and helps us to know God and understand his purposes.

Prayer

Now, with reference to the part that prayer plays in accomplishing our eternal objectives, the Savior instructed his disciples to "pray always" (Luke 21:36), saying: "Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you" (Luke 11:9).

The Prophet Joseph Smith observed that "it is the first principle of the gospel to know for a certainty the character of God, and to know that we may converse with Him as one man converses with another." (*History of the Church*, 6:305.)

Brigham Young, in his realistic manner, stated, "You know that it is one peculiarity of our faith and religion never to ask the Lord to do a thing without being willing to help him all that we are able; and then the Lord will do the rest." (*Discourses of Brigham Young*, comp. John A. Widtsoe, Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Company, 1941, p. 43.)

"Please, Lord, help me to help myself." I am convinced that this prayer for increased personal power is one that God answers. We can learn to solve our problems with God's help.

A convert told me: "I used to pray, not often, but I did pray before we became members. I prayed that someday my husband and I would grow closer together. I never thought it would come to be, but the Church was my answer. We found the power of prayer. I am so thankful for the Church."

Yes, prayer does play an important part in our eternal progress.

Philosophy of work

Let us now consider the great eternal principle of work. During his earthly ministry, the Savior gave a beautiful parable dealing with the requirement that we work.

The parable of the entrusted talents told of a man who was about to leave on a long trip and he, therefore, called his servants together and gave them his goods. To one he gave five talents, to another he gave two, and to another he gave one. To each man he gave according to his ability.

While the master was away, the one who received five talents put them to use and made five more talents. The man who received two talents put them to use and made two more, but the man who received one talent hid it in the ground.

The master returned and asked for an accounting.

To the servants who had multiplied their talents, the master said: "Well done, good and faithful servant; thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things." (Matt. 25:23.)

The master called the servant who had hidden his talent and did not multiply it a slothful servant and said he would take the one talent from him and give it to the servant who had ten talents.

What a marvelous philosophy—the gospel of work!

At the time the present welfare program of the Church was established, the First Presidency explained

that the primary purpose was to "set up . . . a system under which the curse of idleness would be done away with, the evils of a dole abolished, and independence, industry, thrift and self respect be once more established amongst our people. The aim of the Church is to help the people to help themselves. Work is to be re-enthroned as the ruling principle of the lives of our Church membership." (In Conference Report, October 1936, p. 3.)

These are eternal principles and are as applicable to us today as they were when they were given.

Ever since its organization, the Church has encouraged its members to be thrifty and to establish and maintain their economic independence.

Whether our work is mainly mental or physical, or a combination of both, we should learn to do it well. The philosophy of work is a sound philosophy. It is a vital part of the gospel of Jesus Christ that will lead us to eternal life.

Develop talents

The Savior constantly emphasized the doctrine of loving your neighbor, of unselfishness and sacrifice. Let me suggest, therefore, the advisability of engaging in some work that involves service to our fellowman and some sacrifice of our time, talents, and means.

Remember the words of King Benjamin: "When ye are in the service of your fellow beings ye are only in the service of your God." (Mosiah 2:17.)

We should also appreciate that talents are developed by use, and they will not grow and multiply unless they are used. This principle was clearly taught in the Savior's parable.

Talents may be developed in many areas, such as teaching, missionary work, the arts, compassionate service, and many other fields.

Another convert had this to say: "An aspect of the Church I love is its constant learning, developing, and growing power. I'm grateful for the opportunity to work in the Church because this constant contact is helping us to grow and develop in the gospel and in all other areas of our lives."

I encourage you to accept every opportunity presented to develop your talents and to share them with enthusiasm, not as a burden, but as a great blessing, and the Lord will make you equal to the task that you are called upon to perform.

Have faith and endure to the end

The story of men and women who achieve is generally the story of persons overcoming handicaps. It appears that there are lessons that can only be learned through the overcoming of obstacles.

One of the darkest periods in the history of the Church was the winter of 1838-39. The Saints had been persecuted, robbed, and murdered. The Prophet Joseph Smith and his associates had been betrayed and were imprisoned in Liberty Jail.

But emerging from this dark period were the men who led the Church throughout trying experiences as well as amazing growth and development. It was during those dark days that the Lord revealed to the Prophet Joseph Smith, while in the Liberty Jail, a great revelation. Out of the midst of his tribulations, the Prophet Joseph Smith called upon God for comfort.

The answer came as God replied, "My son, peace be unto thy soul; thine adversity and thine afflictions shall be but a small moment;

"And then, if thou endure it well, God shall exalt thee on high." (D&C 121:7-8.)

The Liberty Jail experience truly constituted a refiner's fire for those who participated in it, and it gives us

a better understanding and appreciation of the greatness of the Prophet Joseph Smith and the early leaders of the Church.

What can we learn from the Liberty Jail experience that will be helpful to us? Certainly two impressive truths are apparent:

First, the importance of faith in the Lord Jesus Christ and loyalty to our leaders and to the Church.

Second, the need for enduring to the end, regardless of how many difficulties we have to surmount.

As we endure to the end, we may need to ask the Lord for comfort, and we, like the Prophet Joseph Smith, may hear, "My son, peace be unto thy soul." (D&C 121:7.)

Purpose in life

Our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ is called the Prince of Peace, and his message is a message of peace to the individual and to the world. It is the peace that makes us appreciate mortal life and enables us to bear tribulations. One of the objectives of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints is to establish this peace in the hearts and homes of the people.

Yes, the restored gospel clearly answers the question, "What is the purpose of life?" giving us an understanding of where we came from, why we are here, and where we go after death.

One can see the significance and the purpose of life with the perspective the restored gospel plan gives.

A convert living in Arizona had this to say: "The thing that has changed my life the most is that I have found a purpose in life and a certain peace of mind that I have never felt before."

A convert from Seattle was asked, "What has the Church done for you?" He replied, "Everything.

My life now has purpose and meaning. Now what can I do for the Lord? I owe him all."

Personally, I feel the same as the Seattle convert—I owe the Lord all.

Testimony

I bear you my testimony that I know that God lives and that Jesus is the Christ, our Redeemer and Savior.

And I know that Joseph Smith was the instrument in the hands of the Lord in restoring the gospel in its fulness, in restoring the power to act in the name of God, and in reestablishing the Church of Jesus Christ upon the earth.

I also bear witness that President Spencer W. Kimball is a prophet of God, acting under divine guidance in administering the affairs of the kingdom of God on the earth today. May the Lord bless and sustain him.

I sincerely pray that we will understand the purpose of life, conform our life-style to eternal gospel principles, enjoy peace, happiness, and growth, and receive eternal life, the greatest gift of God, in the name of Jesus Christ, amen.

The Choir sang "My Shepherd Will Supply My Need" without announcement.

President Kimball

We have just listened to Elder Franklin D. Richards, a member of the Presidency of the First Quorum of the Seventy, followed by the Choir singing "My Shepherd Will Supply My Need."

The Choir and congregation will now join in singing "We Thank Thee, O God, for a Prophet."

The Choir and congregation sang
 "We Thank Thee, O God, for a
 Prophet."

President Kimball

We shall now hear from Elder James M. Paramore, a member of the First Quorum of the Seventy.

Elder James M. Paramore

"Love one another"

My beloved brothers and sisters and friends, sometimes when I hear the wonderful local choirs, I tell the members that I sing with the Tabernacle Choir at conference. Oh, to be sure, I don't sit in the choir seats because I don't sing well enough, but I do sit here below and silently sing along with them because their music is so beautiful. A line from one of their numbers that we all love is, "As I have loved you, love one another." May I talk about this for a few minutes today—the love of God and loving one another.

A little story given by one of your missionary sons in Italy a few weeks ago brought this clearly into focus for me.

He recounted that one morning a poor little crippled boy in ragged clothes and badly worn shoes came to a busy street corner and went from person to person, begging for a few lira without success. A man observing the boy from a distance finally went over and picked up this little lad, held him tightly and loved him, and then went forth and cared for him with his means without any judgment.

This sight would have touched any heart and helps us see the power of love that our Father in Heaven would have us understand in our lives. Jesus, the beloved Son of God, reemphasized this new dimension to bless the world when He said, "A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another." (John 13:34.)

God's love shown through his commandments

As we step back and try to understand this love of God, we are astounded by its profound impact. At its center is the reality of a literal Father in Heaven whose love for His children knows no bounds. All truths, wisdom, power, goodness, and love He desires to share with His children, whom He created and sent to earth. He would have us reach up and know Him as a Father, as one who forgives, as a helper, as friend, as a lawgiver—as one anxious to grant to every man the full opportunity of His love and potential and ultimately the blessing to one day become like Him. This love from Father in Heaven and its effects upon *one* of His children or the whole world is miraculous and contagious. He is constantly and everlastingly watching over us to lovingly and gently nudge us along.

He reaches down, through His Son; through prayer, His spirit, His prophets; and through His commandments to express His love and concern and provide His guidance and discipline to everyone who will listen. As the Psalmist said, "The earth is full of the goodness of the Lord." (Ps. 33:5.)

He loves us so much that He gave us His most sacred eternal truths—His commandments—eternal standards to live by. To help us understand their importance, He revealed and surrounded them in sacred and holy settings. Who does not remember how the Ten Command-

ments were given? Men have constantly changed these commandments, but we testify to the world, they have been restored on this earth through a prophet of God because they are essential, eternal truths and if altered by man, lose their power. We testify to the world that these laws — commandments — standards — are one of the highest manifestations of the love God has for His children. Yes, they are commandments — absolutes — to plant the seeds of God's love, His ways, and His divinity in us. They are the fountainhead of all real security, and the inner man recognizes this instinctively and rejoices.

This same loving God also "so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son" (John 3:16) to perform a myriad of blessings for all mankind, including the offering of His own life to atone for man. He lived His life to demonstrate that the love of our Father in Heaven and His plan, His commandments, could in fact bring inner peace and lift mankind here and hereafter.

"Abide in my love"

My assignments these past few months have taken me to many lands, and with all my heart this morning I want to bear witness to the fact that when God's love is known and felt and His commandments followed, the results are always the same. There is a newness of life — a spiritual awakening — that comes to man, its own witness that it is true. It is never forced or brought about by fear, but rather by a bond of love that develops between our Father in Heaven and His children. It is no wonder that we are counseled to look to God and live. This love reaches deep into the inner man, removes barriers, and causes an open spirit to emerge to be receptive to truth, goodness, and change. As it develops in man, he is turned outward toward

others — gradually overcoming himself. When we humbly seek our Father in Heaven by prayer, and by learning and keeping His commandments, He transfers to us His love and many of His powers. Thousands bear witness that His words "If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love" (John 15:10) are true. We then, as the Savior said, begin to attach ourselves as branches to the "true vine" and receive the same strength and power and can expect the same fruit. (See John 15:1-6.)

Then the miracle really happens. Men thus touched and changed by this love of God begin to look upon their neighbors with profound respect and awe for who they are, what their potential really is as children of an eternal father.

I had a very special experience a few years ago on an assignment to Oregon. After a stake conference I was asked to bless a little child. A couple was ushered into a room, and I learned that day what the love of God really was. They had adopted six or seven abandoned, physically handicapped little children who would need their love and care the rest of their lives. I felt humble in their presence, and the love of God filled that room that day. They were no more strangers to God.

As man perceives this love, he begins to overlook the flaws that make up every mortal being and to "esteem his brother as himself." (D&C 38:24.) He lifts and desires to help him whenever and wherever he can. Man's spirit reaches out to everyone, for now there is no enmity, no envy, no restricting philosophies, pride, or vanity — even language does not separate men — there is only an openness and oneness with the Spirit and will of God. The scriptures are beautiful and clear:

"There [will be] no contention in the land," "because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts." (4 Ne. 1:15, Rom. 5:5.)

Does this mean that those who embrace these things will be perfect? No, for they will forever be overcoming and growing. But it does mean that they will be striving toward perfection. The great prophet Moroni counseled us with a profound insight on this point when he said, "Condemn me not because of mine imperfection, neither my father . . . but rather give thanks unto God that he hath made manifest unto you our imperfections, that ye may learn to be more wise than we have been." (Morm. 9:31.)

It is by achieving this gift, this love of God, that we are able to crowd out contention, discord, and judgments. It recognizes the power and goodness innate in man and how totally inconsistent it would be for one having these feelings—this love from God in their lives—to find himself judging others, not sustaining His leaders, for these things are absolutely foreign to the love of God. Our Father in Heaven said that "no one can assist in this work except he shall be humble and full of love." (D&C 12:8.)

As in the case of the man who picked up the little crippled boy, there are no reproachments or judgments—just love and help.

Love of God manifest

How is this love of God manifest today upon the earth and in His church and among its members?

By a Father in Heaven who sent His beloved Son to help man to see His example and follow.

By a Father in Heaven who has established His kingdom, His church, His love and commandments here upon this earth wherein all His blessings may be had and His love felt.

By a loving Father in Heaven who has provided a prophet today and Apostles to receive His word and guide His children.

By families who are filled with

this love and gratitude to God, reaching out everyday to teach their children love, these highest standards, and the peaceable things of God.

By fathers and mothers and children, who, touched by the love of God, unashamedly take each other in their arms often and openly express their love and never give up on those within their circle who especially need their love.

By over thirty thousand missionaries, who, at their own expense, go forth in love to the people everywhere on this earth and take these powers to all who will listen.

And by wonderful leaders and teachers who, though imperfect, reach out to our children and youth in countless ways to help them build bridges to God—His love and goodness.

Blessings in his Church

A few Sundays ago as I sat in a sacrament meeting in Germany, tears of gratitude filled my eyes and my heart was full. I saw eighty-two little children sing songs of love to their Heavenly Father. I was so grateful for the Church which has been reestablished upon the earth, and that I too had one day been a Primary child, and my children also, and had learned those songs and the love they express. I've sung those songs thousands of times since my youth and am grateful for the love and the message they bring. On this very same day in that sacrament meeting was a new convert who is awaiting the arrival of her first child. She was so touched by the children, the Church, the Primary, and the love of our Heavenly Father that was there. She later excitedly said, "Oh, I can hardly wait to have my child so she can go to Primary."

My beloved friends, this is only one of the many great programs and blessings that our Father in Heaven has provided in His church, The

Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. Yes, there is a place of beauty—a refuge upon the earth—where the unchanging standards revealed by a loving Father in Heaven are found.

Now all of this is really what the Lord had in mind, isn't it, when he said, "As I have loved you, . . . love one another." (John 13:34.) That will forever be the ultimate invitation of the Lord to everyone everywhere. We invite all men with all our love to come and partake of this spirit, this peace, this love of God that is in His kingdom here upon the earth today.

In the name of Jesus Christ, amen.

Elder Jack H. Goaslind, Jr.

Offspring of God

My sincere desire this morning is to share with you some of my feelings about the gospel of Jesus Christ and the effect it should have in our relationships with each other. As I have reread the account of the Savior's resurrection, I have been impressed that the Savior's first words as a resurrected being provide the foundation for our relationships with others.

You will recall that early in the morning of the first day of the week, Mary had gone to the sepulchre where they had placed the Lord's body. Finding the stone that sealed the tomb removed, she ran and told Peter and John that the Lord's body had been taken. Peter and John hurried to the tomb to confirm this report. When they saw the empty tomb, they returned to their homes.

But Mary Magdalene "stood without at the sepulchre weeping; and as she wept, she stooped down, and looked into the sepulchre." There she saw two angels in white, who asked her, "Why weepest thou?" And she replied, "Because

President Kimball

To those of the television and radio audience who have just joined us, we are convened in the historic Tabernacle on Temple Square in Salt Lake City, Utah, in this fourth session of the 151st Annual General Conference of the Church.

We have just heard from Elder James M. Paramore, a member of the First Quorum of the Seventy. It will now be our pleasure to hear from Elder Jack H. Goaslind, Jr., a member of the First Quorum of the Seventy.

they have taken away my Lord, and I know not where they have laid him."

Having said this, she turned around and saw Jesus, but she did not recognize him. The Savior also asked why she was weeping. Mary said, thinking she was talking to the gardener, "Sir, if thou have borne him hence, tell me where thou hast laid him, and I will take him away." (John 20:11-15.)

The Savior then called her by name, as he also could each of us, and she immediately recognized him. Because of her great love for him and her witness that he lives, she extended her arms to embrace him.

With love, concern, and assurance, he spoke these eternally significant words: "Touch me not; for I am not yet ascended to my Father; but go to my brethren, and say unto them, I ascend unto my Father, and your Father; and to my God, and your God." (John 20:17.)

"To my Father, and your Father; to my God, and your God." How important this message was then, and how vital it is for us today! The Apostle Paul clearly taught the

same doctrine when he said:

"For in him we live, and move, and have our being; as certain also of your own poets have said, For we are also his offspring.

"Forasmuch then as we are the offspring of God, we ought not to think that the Godhead is like unto gold, or silver, or stone, graven by art and man's device." (Acts 17:28-29.)

Through prayer, study, and living the gospel, I have come to appreciate the fact that we are all our Father's children—part of one large family. We are sons and daughters of God. Our Heavenly Father is in a very real sense the actual Father of our spirits, which gives literal significance to the phrase "Our Heavenly Father." It follows that we are all brothers and sisters regardless of race, creed, or nationality. There is a spark of divinity in each of us.

Reach out to others

How should this truth affect our relationships with others? If all of God's children truly realized and felt the impact of this great truth, there would be far more understanding, compassion, and love shown to one another. Wars, crime, and all forms of cruelty would cease.

I am convinced that true brotherly love is essential to our happiness and to world peace. We must love one another and unselfishly share our gifts, talents, and resources. It is little wonder that, when asked by the Pharisee, a lawyer by profession, "Master, which is the great commandment in the law?" the Savior answered: "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind.

"This is the first and great commandment.

"And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.

"On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets." (Matt. 22:36-40.)

And again, in the closing moments of his life he made this glorious pronouncement:

"A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another.

"By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another." (John 13:34-35.)

William Shakespeare once said, "They do not love that do not show their love." (*The Two Gentlemen of Verona*, act 1, sc. 2, line 31.) We need to show our love, beginning in the home and then widening our circle of love to encompass our ward members, our less active and non-member neighbors, and also those who have passed beyond the veil.

To leaders in the Church, to every member, may I ask you to reach out as never before and extend the hand of fellowship to our brothers and sisters who need the light of the gospel. I am persuaded that much of our love is confined to mere lip service and dreams of good deeds accomplished, but true love must be expressed in unselfish acts of kindness that bring others closer to our Heavenly Father.

More than lip service

How often I think of the great example of Peter and John as they approached the temple at the hour of prayer. A certain man, lame from his birth, was laid at the gate called Beautiful to ask alms of those who entered. When he saw Peter and John approaching, he extended his hand for their contribution. Peter said to him, "Look on us." He immediately gave heed, expecting to receive something of them. "Then Peter said, Silver and gold have I none; but such as I have give I thee: In the

name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth rise up and walk."

I believe this is as far as we have gone, in most cases, in helping our fellowmen in today's world. However, Peter did not stop with mere words. The scripture records that he then "took him by the right hand, and lifted him up," and immediately the man's feet and ankles received strength and he stood, walked, leaped, and entered the temple praising God. (See Acts 3:1-9.)

It isn't silver and gold the world needs today but the extended hand and the lifting influence of the Spirit of the Lord.

A good friend shared this story about how she learned the deeper meaning of love. Their family has always been active in the Church, trying their best to live the commandments. They were shocked and disappointed, however, when their daughter became engaged to a nonmember. The next day the mother was telling a good friend about her feelings. She knew her daughter's fiance was a fine young man, but she felt angry, hurt, betrayed, and numb and did not want to give her daughter a wedding or even see her. She said that the Lord must have guided her to talk to her friend because she received this reply:

"What kind of a mother are you that you only love her when she does what you want her to do? That is selfish, self-centered, qualified love. It's easy to love our children when they are good; but when they make mistakes, they need our love even more. We should love and care for them no matter what they do. It doesn't mean we condone or approve of the errors, but we help, not condemn; love, not hate; forgive, not judge. We build them up rather than tear them down; we lead them, not desert them. We love when they are the most unlovable, and if you can't or won't do that, you are a poor mother."

With tears streaming down her face, the mother asked her friend how she could ever thank her. The friend answered, "Do it for someone else when the need arises. Someone did it for me, and I will be eternally grateful."

This story concerns a mother's love for her daughter. But this is only the beginning. We must show such genuine love for all our Father's children. When we learn to do this, we will be truly godlike. As John wrote, "Beloved, let us love one another: for love is of God; and every one that loveth is born of God and knoweth God.

"He that loveth not knoweth not God; for God is love." (1 John 4:7-8.)

Reach out in love

Jesus Christ, our perfect exemplar, consistently demonstrated his love through acts of compassion, and he understood the most appropriate ways to express love.

At Jacob's well, he took the time to teach a woman of Samaria some glorious eternal truths. She accepted his testimony that he was the Messiah and returned to the city to testify, "Is not this the Christ?" (John 4:29.)

He gave of himself to the outcasts of society. A despised leper worshipped the Lord and said, "Lord, if thou wilt, thou canst make me clean." The scripture records—note it well—that "Jesus put forth his hand, and touched him, saying, I will; be thou clean. And immediately his leprosy was cleansed." (Matt. 8:2-3.)

In one of his most dramatic miracles, Jesus still paid attention to individuals. As he prepared to raise Lazarus from the dead, he saw Mary weeping, and, the record states, "he groaned in the spirit, and was troubled." And then, "Jesus wept." (John 11:33-35.) He used this occa-

sion to express a divine testimony of his mission: "I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live." (John 11:25.)

In his visit to the Nephites, the Savior gave this important admonition: "Therefore, what manner of men ought ye to be? Verily I say unto you, even as I am." (3 Ne. 27:27.)

It is my witness that we can be even as he is. We can demonstrate our love in ways that have eternal benefits both for ourselves and for those we serve.

Let us accept the challenge issued by our prophet two years ago:

"It seems clear to me, indeed, this impression weighs upon me—that the Church is at a point in its growth and maturity when we are at last ready to move forward in a major way. . . . But the basic decisions needed for us to move forward, as a people, must be made by the individual members of the Church. The major strides which must be made by the Church will follow upon the major strides to be made by us as individuals.

"We have paused on some plateaus long enough. Let us resume

our journey forward and upward. Let us quietly put an end to our reluctance to reach out to others—whether in our own families, wards, or neighborhoods." (Spencer W. Kimball, in Conference Report, Apr. 1979, p. 114.)

Let us decide today that we will reach out in love to our families, our less active or nonmember neighbors, our departed kindred, or anyone who has need of love. I testify that great blessings will come to us as individuals, as a Church, and as a brotherhood of mankind when we learn to live outside ourselves in love, in the name of Jesus Christ, amen.

The Choir sang "Jesus, Savior, Pilot Me" without announcement.

President Kimball

We have just listened to Elder Jack H. Goaslind, Jr., a member of the First Quorum of the Seventy, followed by the Choir singing "Jesus, Savior, Pilot Me."

We shall now be pleased to hear from Elder Mark E. Petersen, a member of the Council of the Twelve.

Elder Mark E. Petersen

My wife was the daughter of a sea captain who lost a ship at sea. As the survivors drifted in lifeboats hour after hour before they were picked up, they all sang, "Jesus, Savior, Pilot Me." (*Hymns*, no. 121.)

Together with this choir and with my Brethren, I testify of the Lord Jesus Christ, the divine Son of Almighty God, the Savior of the world, our Redeemer. I am grateful for the testimony that we bear, and as we approach the Easter time, I testify with my Brethren that He lives. He is the living Christ.

Our great mission as Latter-day Saints is to bear testimony of Him. Through all the trials and tribulations of this world, if we will but pray as the choir has just sung—"Jesus, Savior, pilot me"—we shall go through life successfully, not free from troubles and trials, but always accompanied by the Holy Spirit, who will see us safely through.

Moral and spiritual crisis

It is no news to anyone that we are in a world crisis. But the basic

problem is not what most people think it is. It is not fundamentally economic, and it is not basically due to any oil shortage.

Our basic problem is moral and spiritual. We must return to God.

Since all human beings are His children, His commandments apply to everyone. They pertain to every phase of our lives. If we expect to really enjoy peace and happiness in this world, we must have faith enough to keep those commandments. If we ignore them or violate them, we bring evil consequences down upon our own selves.

There is no escaping these two alternatives. One or the other will control our lives, so it is only sensible to be realistic and face up to these hard facts.

Inasmuch as God has given us our free agency to do as we please, He expects us to use our intelligence and ingenuity to improve our circumstances both spiritually and temporally. He wants us to be successful in life and desires to help us. Man really is that he might have joy. (See 2 Ne. 2:25.)

Then we should plan well for our future and not live entirely for the present nor suppose that the status quo will continue on indefinitely.

We must be industrious, we must be frugal, we must seek a proper balance between our needs and our desires, and especially we must reestablish our lives upon a spiritual foundation.

Are we not the children of God? Are we not to seek first His way of doing things? If we serve Him properly, will that not place us on a spiritual foundation?

Life confronts us with many serious problems. Some are moral; others are economic. But all can cause us difficulty.

Fight with all our power

Truly we are living in a troubled world. We are surrounded by it and

are subject to all its perils, plagues, inducements, persuasions, and temptations. But nevertheless, regardless of all that, *we are not to be of the world*. That is where spirituality comes in. Then shouldn't we sing with the choir, "Jesus, Savior, pilot me"?

What makes this a *moral and a spiritual crisis* is that so many people reject or ignore the standards of life that God has set up for us, and many even attempt to brush Him aside. They prefer darkness to light because their deeds are evil.

For example, there are many kinds of immorality which make a deadly assault upon purity of life. What shall we do about them? Surrender? By no means! We must fight them with all our power!

We shall be virtuous and clean ourselves and teach our children to be pure. Don't we hear the voice of Almighty God crying out to each of us: "Be ye clean that bear the vessels of the Lord"? (D&C 38:42.)

We have the ever-increasing encroachment of liquor, wine, tobacco, and various narcotics. What shall we do about them?

We shall be loyal enough to the Lord to obey the Word of Wisdom. That law is more vital and pertinent now than ever before in our history. No one can survive the present onslaught of addiction without obeying the Word of Wisdom.

The world tempts us to lie and cheat and steal; to be shoplifters or worse; to tarnish another person's good name; or to steal someone else's wife or husband, which is one of the worst kinds of thievery. What shall we do about that?

We shall keep the Ten Commandments, avoiding dishonesty in all its forms and rejecting every temptation to covet anything or anybody that is our neighbor's.

We shall obey our thirteenth article of faith, which says, "We believe in being honest, true, chaste, benevolent, [and] virtuous."

Is there any other answer?

Can any liar, can any thief, can any unchaste person invade the kingdom of God? Not in their sins! They can enter only after the most sincere and complete repentance, nothing less!

Avoid debt; prepare for future

But the world affects us in other areas, too, especially in economic ways. These include strong persuasions to overspend our financial resources, to buy beyond our means, to overextend our credit and thus sink deeply into debt. Oh, the inducements of sales pressures, of persuasive advertising, of easy credit, and the unwise use of credit cards!

What shall we do about all that?

First and foremost, we shall determine to live within our means, to carefully budget our affairs, and to stay within the budget.

We shall determine before God that we will be honest and pay our just obligations and not try to escape them. Most assuredly we shall avoid any further debt exceeding our ability to pay.

If temporarily we must limit our customary life-style, shall we not be willing to do so as a means toward financial survival? Shall we not be willing to sacrifice our ordinary desires when necessary and cut our cloth to fit the pattern of revised circumstances forced upon us by this recession?

There are many very good people who keep most of the Lord's commandments with respect to the virtuous side of life, but who overlook His commandments in temporal things. They do not heed His warning to prepare for a possible future emergency, apparently feeling that in the midst of all this trouble "it won't happen to us." It is not always the other fellow's problem. It is our problem also whenever there is economic trouble afloat.

To prepare for the future is part of God's eternal plan, both spiritually and temporally. To protect ourselves against reversals and hardships is only good sense.

A lesson in self-reliance

On the street in front of my house is a row of chestnut trees. In the spring they are beautiful, all covered with gorgeous blossoms.

As the summer moves on, I see nuts begin to form in their little green pods. In the autumn the nuts drop to the ground. As they do, squirrels seem to appear from nowhere. They sit on the sidewalk, bite off the pods, and then run quickly away with each nut to store it for their winter's supply.

They are wise little animals, and they are industrious. They are quite fearless, too, for no one on our street ever disturbs them. It is intensely interesting just to watch them work for their living the way they do.

They do not allow the chestnuts to go to waste, not one of them. They know their lives must depend on them during the cold and unproductive winter months when nuts do not grow on trees.

They don't depend on anyone else to gather those nuts for them, either. They rely entirely upon themselves. The Lord gives them the harvest, but they must gather it in.

They teach us a great lesson in self-reliance. It is a lesson that is applicable to human beings as well as to the creatures of nature.

Then will God also help us in our times of stress? Of course He will! Did He not say, "Consider the lilies of the field" (Matt. 6:28) and "behold the fowls of the air: . . . Are ye not much better than they?" (Matt. 6:26.)

Of course He will help us. But there is an important *if* involved—if we keep His commandments.

He teaches us to be self-reliant

and industrious, to plan ahead, to provide for possible hard times, to avoid obligations unless we are sure we can handle them, and then to *serve him* with such devotion that He will be pleased to augment all of our own earnest efforts.

But He also expects us to be wise enough to *limit our financial obligations to a reasonable expectation of paying out*.

Become self-sustaining

In our planning, why not write a priority system for our family to cover our particular financial circumstances and make sure that first things really do come first? We can avoid financial bondage if we follow such a plan.

Let us wisely ask ourselves whether our desires—or our actual needs—determine what we buy.

The Lord has given us a welfare program. It is inspired. It applies to all Church members. A most important part of that plan is that we ourselves—each one of us—shall learn to become self-sustaining, that we accept the principle that we must look ahead, save a little, build up some reserves, live within our income, and make every effort to sustain ourselves in good times and bad.

Is not that the heart of our welfare plan?

That great program teaches us to put away one year's supply of our necessities—not the frills and the superfluities. We can get along without the frosting on the cake, can't we, or the whipped cream on the apple pie?

And if necessary we can get along just fine without either the cake or the pie, can't we, and just be glad for the staples of life?

Our welfare storehouses help many worthy people in emergencies. That is what they are for. Any one of us might suffer a tragedy which would make it necessary for us to receive such assistance. And that

help is always available to worthy people and is cheerfully given.

But the most important storehouses in the entire welfare plan are those that are within the walls of our own homes. We must provide our own storehouses for our own families in our own homes as far as possible to meet any rainy days that may come our way.

The bishops' storehouses are wonderful, and they do help thousands of deserving and faithful Saints, just as they should. But they are not intended to supply the four-and-a-half million total membership of the Church. They are emergency outlets only.

Keep His commandments

But with all our efforts, let us never forget that our greatest resource is *the Lord our God*.

Anciently He told Israel that He would prevent droughts and provide good harvests *if* they would serve Him and keep His commandments. He makes the same promise to us.

He also said He would open the windows of heaven and pour out such great blessings upon us that we could hardly contain them *if* we would pay an honest tithing. So you see that the principle of tithe paying is introduced as part of the Lord's plan for our own welfare and self-preservation.

He said in our day that the Saints "shall pay one-tenth of all their interest annually; and this shall be a standing law unto them forever." (D&C 119:4.)

So again we see that tithe paying is part of the divine plan to protect us against hard times. I repeat, tithing is to protect us against hard times! Why do we not recognize it as such? Why do some say they cannot afford to pay tithing when just the reverse is true?

And when great tribulations come, what did He say? "He that is

tithed shall not be burned.” (D&C 64:23.)

And what else did He say? “If my people observe not this law, to keep it holy, and by this law sanctify the land of Zion unto me, that my statutes and my judgments may be kept thereon, . . . verily I say unto you, *it shall not be a land of Zion unto you.*” (D&C 119:6; italics added.)

Do you see then how obedience to the law of tithing is a safeguard for us?

And what else did He say? This is “a day for the tithing of my people”—now—today—for “now it is called today until the coming of the Son of Man.” (D&C 64:23.)

Then where is our faith? Where is our obedience?

And He said further, “I will not spare any that remain in Babylon” (D&C 64:24), meaning, of course, those who reject His word and continue to indulge in worldly practices.

So again He emphasizes the moral aspect of our present crisis and the spiritual side of the same crisis.

He then added, “Labor while it is called today” (D&C 64:25)—obey Him, serve Him, walk in righteousness before Him, and “be ye clean that bear the vessels of the Lord” (D&C 38:42). That’s the law!

Avoid bondage to sin, addiction, or debt

Let us remember that it is against the will of God that any one of us should be in bondage—in any way—neither to sin nor to addiction nor to debt.

“Ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free” (Jn. 8:32), He declared—free from sin, free from addiction of all kinds, and free from the slavery of debt. His truth, which is His gospel, will make us free—if we obey Him!

Shall we trust Him? His burden is so much easier than that of the world.

“Come unto me,” He says “. . . and I will give you rest.” (Matt. 11:28.)

He loves us. He will watch over us, and—even in hard times He will prosper us—if we are not of little faith. He may try us, but He will not forsake us.

Don’t we in great sincerity sing:

*How firm a foundation, ye Saints of
the Lord,
Is laid for your faith in his excellent
word! . . .*

*The soul that on Jesus hath leaned
for repose,
I will not, I cannot, desert to his
foes;
That soul, though all hell should
endeavor to shake,
I’ll never, no never, no never
forsake?
(Hymns, no. 66.)*

That is His promise, and His word is true, I testify in His sacred name, the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, amen.

The Choir sang “The Lord’s Prayer” without announcement.

President Kimball

Elder Mark E. Petersen, a member of the Council of the Twelve Apostles, has just spoken to us, followed by the Tabernacle Choir singing “The Lord’s Prayer.”

We appreciate the courtesies shown by the owners and operators of the many radio and television stations who offered their facilities as a public service to make the proceedings of this conference available to a large audience throughout many areas of the world.

We shall conclude this fourth session of the conference with the Tabernacle Choir singing “Come Unto Jesus,” after which the benedic-

tion will be pronounced by Elder F. Enzo Busche, a member of the First Quorum of the Seventy. This conference will then be adjourned until two o'clock this afternoon.

The Choir sang "Come Unto Jesus."

Elder F. Enzo Busche gave the benediction.

SECOND DAY AFTERNOON MEETING

FIFTH SESSION

The fifth and final session of the 151st Annual General Conference commenced at 2:00 P.M. on Sunday, April 5, 1981.

President Spencer W. Kimball presided at and President Marion G. Romney conducted this session.

Music was provided by the Tabernacle Choir directed by Jerold Ottley with Robert Cundick at the organ.

President Romney made the following remarks at the outset of the meeting:

President Marion G. Romney

President Spencer W. Kimball, who presides at this and all other sessions of this conference, has asked me to conduct this session.

We extend a sincere welcome to all assembled this afternoon in the Tabernacle on Temple Square in Salt Lake City, Utah, in the fifth and concluding session of the 151st Annual General Conference of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. We also welcome those seated in the Salt Palace where Elders Gene R. Cook and G. Homer Durham preside.

We send our greetings and blessings to members of the Church and many friends everywhere participating in these proceedings by radio and television.

The Tabernacle Choir with Jerold Ottley directing and Robert Cundick at the organ is providing the music for this session. The Choir will begin this service by singing "For Our Devotions, Father." The invocation will be offered by Elder Paul H. Dunn, a member of the First Quorum of the Seventy.

The Choir sang "For Our Devotions, Father."

Elder Paul H. Dunn offered the invocation.

President Romney

The Tabernacle Choir will now sing "O Divine Redeemer." Following the singing, we shall hear from Elder Howard W. Hunter, a member of the Council of the Twelve.

The Tabernacle Choir sang "O Divine Redeemer."

President Romney

Elder Howard W. Hunter, a member of the Council of the Twelve Apostles, will now address us. He will be followed by Elder Royden G. Derrick, a member of the Presidency of the First Quorum of the Seventy.

Elder Howard W. Hunter

Question about Bible and Book of Mormon

Recently a young friend in the mission field wrote a letter to me regarding a question that had been asked of him concerning the concluding verses of the Bible and how they apply to the Book of Mormon. We remember that at the end of the book of Revelation, the last book of the Bible, the author, John, issues a warning and a curse upon any man who adds to or takes away from the book. Specifically, these are the words he wrote:

"For I testify unto every man that heareth the words of the prophecy of this book, If any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book:

"And if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book." (Rev. 22:18-19.)

These verses of scripture have been cited repeatedly by those attempting to discredit the Book of Mormon, claiming that God's revelation to man is closed. Nothing more is to be added and nothing is to be taken away. They assert that the Book of Mormon is an attempt to add to the words of the Bible. These claims were made when the Book of Mormon was first published and have continued to be made, and are made today. Is there any validity to such assertions?

Warning applies only to book of Revelation

The answer to this query is really very simple. A careful reading of the words makes it clear that the warning against adding to or taking

away does not refer to the whole Bible or even to the New Testament, but to use John's words, only to the words of "the book of this prophecy." That is, the prophecy contained in the book of Revelation. This is substantiated by the fact that some of the books of the New Testament had not yet been written when John wrote the book of Revelation, and even those that had been written and were in existence at that time had not yet been gathered into one compilation.

The collection of writings consisting of the sixty-six books we know as the Bible were brought together and compiled into one volume long after John wrote the prophetic book that has been placed at the end of the collection. It is clear, therefore, that the terrible judgments pronounced upon those who add to the book could not possibly apply to the whole of the Bible or even to the New Testament, but only to the book of Revelation.

John wrote other scriptures

Secondly, the warning uses the words "the prophecy of this book" and also "the words of the book of this prophecy." The word *book* in both instances is singular and could only refer to the book of prophecy written by John which is titled, in the King James Version, "The Revelation of St. John the Divine" and is often referred to as the Apocalypse—a Greek word which means revealed. Of necessity the word *book* would have been in the singular because when written it was not associated with any other book or books, and it was after many years and many ecclesiastical debates that it was added to the collection that became known as the new canon of scripture or the New Testament.

It is also interesting to note that John himself added to scripture after

writing the book of Revelation, which is generally conceded to have been written while he was on the Isle of Patmos. It was long after John left Patmos that he wrote his first epistle. This fact standing alone would be sufficient to defeat the claim that revelation was closed and that man was enjoined from adding to scripture. This adds cumulative evidence that John had reference to the book of Revelation only.

Admonition in Deuteronomy

In the Old Testament also are found similar vigorous denunciations and commands that there shall not be taken away or added to the words that were written. The first is found in Deuteronomy, written at the time Moses was exhorting Israel to live the law of the Lord. The Torah was oral law and had not been reduced to writing prior to the time of the codification of the law in Deuteronomy. Now that it had been reduced to writing by Moses prior to his death and assumed to be complete, Moses wrote:

"Ye shall not add unto the word which I command you, neither shall ye diminish ought from it, that ye may keep the commandments of the Lord your God which I command you." (Deut. 4:2.)

Later in this same book of the law, Moses repeated the admonition in similar words. He said,

"What thing soever I command you, observe to do it: thou shalt not add thereto, nor diminish from it." (Deut. 12:32.)

In the minds of some, these admonitions in the Old Testament raise the same question as to the Book of Mormon being an attempted addition to scripture as does the injunction and warning at the end of the book of Revelation. In effect, these passages contain the same injunction as the one at the close of the Apocalypse; and if the same interpretation

and argument was applied to them as is applied to the closing verses of the book of Revelation, there would be no scripture after the writings of Moses. Such an absurdity would result in discarding the greater part of the Old Testament and all of the books of the New Testament.

Revelation guides prophets and Church

A careful reading of each of these admonitions makes it clear that *man* is not to make changes in the revelations of the Lord: *man* is not to add to or take from the words of God. There is no indication or intimation that God could not, or would not, add to or take from; nor would any reasonable person with a belief in the divine powers of God consciously believe that God would be so restricted. Without question he would have the right and power to give additional revelation for the guidance of his children in any age and to add additional scripture.

A study of the revelations of the Lord in holy writ confirms the fact that it is continuous revelation that guides prophets and the Church in any age. Were it not for continuous revelation, Noah would not have been prepared for the deluge that encompassed the earth. Abraham would not have been guided from Haran to Hebron, the Land of Promise. Continuous revelation led the children of Israel from bondage back to their promised land. Revelation through prophets guided missionary efforts, directed the rebuilding of Solomon's temple, and denounced the infiltration of pagan practices among the Israelites.

Before the ascension of Christ, he promised the remaining eleven apostles, "lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world." (Matt. 28:20.) Following his ascension, he guided the Church by revelation until the death of the Apostles

and subsequent apostasy of the Church of Jesus Christ.

A distinctive sign of the last days that will precede the eventual second coming of the Lord was seen in vision by that same Apostle who recorded the book of Revelation. He said:

"I saw another angel fly in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people." (Rev. 14:6.)

The fact that John saw a messenger from God reveal anew a lost gospel negates the argument that further revelation could not be added to the Bible.

Testimony of divine guidance

We testify to all the world that heavenly ministers have already appeared in our age, bringing authority from heaven and restoring truths lost through corrupted teachings and practices. God has spoken anew and continues to provide guidance for all his children through a living prophet today. We declare that he, as promised, is with his servants always and directs the affairs of his Church throughout the world. As in times past, revelation directs missionary labors, the building of temples, the calling of priesthood officers, and warns against the evils of society that

may deny salvation to our Father's children.

In a revelation to a modern oracle, Joseph Smith, the Lord said:

"For I am no respecter of persons, and will that all men shall know that the day speedily cometh; the hour is not yet, but is nigh at hand, when peace shall be taken from the earth, and the devil shall have power over his own dominion.

"And also the Lord shall have power over his saints, and shall reign in their midst." (D&C 1:35-36.)

The Savior is reigning in the midst of the Saints today through continuous revelation. I testify that he is with his servants in this day and will be until the end of the earth.

May our vision not be so narrow that we would relegate revelation to only the ancients. God is merciful and loves his children in all ages and has revealed himself to this time in history. Of this I solemnly testify, in the name of Jesus Christ, amen.

President Romney

Elder Howard W. Hunter, a member of the Council of the Twelve Apostles, has just spoken to us.

We shall now hear from Elder Royden G. Derrick, a member of the Presidency of the First Quorum of the Seventy. He will be followed by Elder Teddy E. Brewerton, a member of the First Quorum of the Seventy.

Elder Royden G. Derrick

Mandates from God never change

The history of the people of ancient America, recorded in the Book of Mormon, teaches that civilizations are built on moral foundations; that when people are morally strong, they do well; that when they are morally weak, they suffer. It teaches us that freedom cannot outlive morality and

that freedom is not free—it must be earned.

It teaches that people change again and again, but that mandates from God never change. They remain the same because the fundamental principles of good behavior are everlasting and never change. The Lord has given us direction through the scriptures as to how we should be-

have to enrich our lives, to bring peace to our souls, to strengthen our families, and to uplift the dignity of men.

The Lord said, "Wherefore, hear my voice and follow me, and you shall be a free people." (D&C 38:22.)

During his ministry he said, "Know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." (John 8:32.)

The Psalmist wrote, "Blessed is the nation whose God is the Lord." (Ps. 33:12.)

From Ecclesiastes, "Fear God, and keep his commandments: for this is the whole duty of man." (Eccl. 12:13.)

The Savior said, "For whatsoever ye sow, that shall ye also reap." (D&C 6:33.)

And from latter-day scripture we learn, "There is a law, irrevocably decreed in heaven before the foundations of this world, upon which all blessings are predicated—

"And when we obtain any blessing from God, it is by obedience to that law upon which it is predicated." (D&C 130:20-21.)

Home and family

The basic unit of society is the family. Our moral values are established in our family relations. The responsibility for teaching moral principles rests with the home. But not every home offers the love and guidance necessary to responsible parenthood. In an ideal society, the home should accept the responsibility for teaching moral values.

The Lord said, "But I have commanded you to bring up your children in light and truth." (D&C 93:40.)

And again, "And they shall also teach their children to pray, and to walk uprightly before the Lord." (D&C 68:28.)

The teachers in church and in school should be allies of the parents

in teaching children appropriate values that will guide them throughout their lives. The home should be a laboratory of learning, where these values, and more sensitive ones too, are inculcated into the lives of family members through daily experiences. Then the three work in harmony to fulfill parental responsibility.

Unfortunately, today many societies in the world do not place sufficient importance upon the home and the family. In a recent edition of *U.S. News and World Report*, an article was published quoting statistics that show an alarming decay among the families of America. Problems that cause such serious erosion are centered around moral issues and selfishness. Strong families result when family members serve one another. When we concentrate on our own comfort and on satisfying our own appetites, the family and the society are adversely affected.

Key to eternal family

We spend our time doing many things, some of which have influence on this life only, and others, on both here and beyond. Building a family is an eternal objective. The benefits of family unity can extend beyond our mortal existence.

Several weeks ago, while en route to Monterrey, Mexico, I sat next to an attractive Mexican of Lamanite extraction. During our conversation I learned that he had eight children. He was obviously proud to be their father. I encouraged him to talk about them. Then I asked, "How long do you plan to be with them?"

"As long as I live."

"And then what?"

"I'll lie down and turn to dust."

From the Bible, we read the words of the Savior to his Apostles just prior to his crucifixion: "In my Father's house are many mansions: if

it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you.

"And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also." (John 14:2-3.)

I asked him what Jesus meant by that. He pondered the question, and then he was ready to listen. I explained about the spirit world and the Resurrection and asked, "Do you *really* love your children?" He was emphatic.

"How would you like to be with your wife and children in the next life?"

"There is nothing I would rather have."

I explained that he could have them. We talked about the Book of Mormon—that it was a history of his progenitors, that it contained the narration of the visit of Jesus Christ to America, and that it was a key to having an eternal family. I had him write his name and address on a card and promised to have a Book of Mormon in Spanish delivered to his home.

When I arrived in Monterrey, I gave the referral to the missionaries. Last week I received a letter reporting on their visit to the family. They wrote: "The following Sunday, after the conference, we went to Roberto's home. His wife came to the fence, and supposing we were preachers of religion she told us it would not be possible to see her husband, that he was very busy. But after talking and showing the card you gave us, he quickly came out with open arms to greet us. We entered his home and knelt down with the family in prayer. He has eight beautiful children. The Spirit of the Lord was present.

"He gratefully accepted our offer to return to teach them the plan of salvation. He received the Book of Mormon and promised to read the words of the book from cover to cover."

How could any thinking person who loves his family not want such a precious gift—to be with his wife and his family in this life and the next, and then to include parents and other progenitors (going back) and grandchildren and their continuing posterity (going forward) in an eternal family relationship.

The scriptures say, "All covenants, contracts, bonds, obligations, oaths, vows, performances, connections, associations, or expectations, that are not made and entered into and sealed by the Holy Spirit of promise, . . . by revelation and commandment through the medium of mine anointed, whom I have appointed on the earth to hold this power . . . are of no efficacy, virtue, or force in and after the resurrection from the dead; for all contracts that are not made unto this end have an end when men are dead." (D&C 132:7.)

Missionary work to dead

I testify that the authority from God to seal by the Holy Spirit of Promise for time and all eternity is vested in our prophet, Spencer W. Kimball. He has properly delegated that authority today so that this sacred work of sealing families for time and all eternity goes forward daily in the holy temples of God.

How I wish that my friends who are not in the Church would listen to this important message—that you can be with your families forever. All you have to do to qualify is to keep the commandments of the Lord.

The scriptures tell us, "And the spirit and the body are the soul of man." (D&C 88:15.) When a man dies, his body goes to the grave and his spirit goes to a place of waiting. We call that place paradise.

President Joseph F. Smith was privileged to look into the spirit world back to the time of the advent of the Savior into that great world of

the spirits of the dead about the time of the Crucifixion: "And I saw the hosts of the dead, both small and great," he wrote.

"And there were gathered together in one place an innumerable company of the spirits of the just, who had been faithful in the testimony of Jesus while they lived in mortality. . . .

"All these had departed the mortal life, firm in the hope of a glorious resurrection, through the grace of God the Father and his Only Begotten Son, Jesus Christ. . . .

"While this vast multitude waited and conversed, rejoicing in the hour of their deliverance from the chains of death, the Son of God appeared, declaring liberty to the captives who had been faithful. . . .

"But unto the wicked he did not go, and among the ungodly and the unrepentant who had defiled themselves while in the flesh, his voice was not raised. . . .

"But behold, from among the righteous, he organized his forces and appointed messengers, clothed with power and authority, and commissioned them to go forth and carry the light of the gospel to them that were in darkness, even to all the spirits of men; and thus was the gospel preached to the dead.

"And the chosen messengers went forth to declare the acceptable day of the Lord and proclaim liberty to the captives who were bound, even unto all who would repent of their sins and receive the gospel.

"Thus was the gospel preached to those who had died in their sins, without a knowledge of the truth, or in transgression, having rejected the prophets." (D&C 138:11-12, 14, 18, 20, 30-32.)

Today, too, there are spirits awaiting their day of deliverance and resurrection. "Faithful elders of this dispensation, when they depart from mortal life, continue their labors in

the preaching of the gospel of repentance and redemption, through the sacrifice of the Only Begotten Son of God, among those who are in darkness and under the bondage of sin in the great world of the spirits of the dead.

"The dead who repent will be redeemed, through obedience to the ordinances of the house of God,

"And after they have paid the penalty of their transgressions, and are washed clean, shall receive a reward according to their works, for they are heirs of salvation." (D&C 138:57-59.)

Moral rewards in this life and life to come

One of the major missions of the Church is to uniquely identify these individuals who have died and perform the necessary saving ordinances in their behalf, for they cannot do it for themselves. Once these ordinances are performed, if the individual accepts the gospel in the great world of spirits, then this work will be effective.

One of the ordinances performed in the temples of the Lord is the sealing of wives to husbands and the sealing of children to parents for the living and by proxy for the dead, thus uniting families for the eternities according to their willingness to conform to gospel principles.

And so, when members of a society serve the Lord according to the commandments he has given them, and uphold proper moral values, they receive very special rewards both in this life and in the life to come. This is not man's program; it is the Lord's program of salvation, which exalts and brings freedom, in every sense of the word, to those who will hear his voice and follow him, to which I testify in the name of him who gave his life that these things might be, even the Lord, Jesus Christ, amen.

President Romney

Elder Royden G. Derrick, a member of the Presidency of the First Quorum of the Seventy, has just addressed us.

We shall now be pleased to hear from Elder Teddy E. Brewerton, a member of the First Quorum of the Seventy.

Elder Teddy E. Brewerton

Obedience

When President Tanner returned from presiding over the European missions, he was asked what, in his opinion, was the most important attribute of a successful individual or missionary. After a short pause, pondering the implication of such a question, he spoke one word: "obedience." If we do not obey, the power to obey is lessened. Our capability to recognize good is weakened.

As the Lord says in section 93: "And that wicked one cometh and taketh away light and truth, through disobedience." (D&C 93:39.)

Aristotle said that wicked men obey because of fear and that good men obey because of love. (See *Useful Quotations*, ed. Tyron Edwards, New York: Grosset & Dunlap, 1933, p. 428.)

Henry Ward Beecher said that "laws are not masters, but servants, and he rules them who obeys them." (*Proverbs from Plymouth Pulpit*, ed. Wm. Drysdale, New York: D. Appleton and Co., 1887, p. 65.)

Why obey? Because there *is* a living God who loves us and desires to bless us.

True nature of God

Elder Mark E. Petersen stated, "Our whole religion is based upon the fact of immortality. Men have come back from the dead to accomplish the restoration of the gospel. Even God himself came.

"First came the Father, and Jesus Christ, his beloved Son. They visited Joseph Smith in the sacred

grove near Palmyra, New York. They talked with him face-to-face and answered his questions.

"Moroni also came, repeatedly, visiting with and instructing the young prophet. Then came John the Baptist of New Testament times. Peter, James, and John were next. Moses came also to the Kirtland Temple. And then came Elijah. . . .

"Each one was himself physical evidence of the fact of immortality, but each one brought more than the proof of life after death. Each one came with a great purpose—far beyond the proof of immortality. The Father and Son opened this dispensation and provided the knowledge of the true nature of God—that he is a person and that man was made in his image."

The Father introduced Christ to Joseph as his Only Begotten Son. They restored the knowledge of the true nature of God.

"Moroni revealed the location of the Book of Mormon. John the Baptist brought the Aaronic Priesthood. Peter, James, and John brought the Melchizedek Priesthood. Moses brought the keys of the gathering of the Jews to Palestine and the gathering of Ephraim and Manasseh." And Elijah . . . what did he bring? The sealing power. ("The Mission of Elijah," unpublished address to the Genealogical Department, n.d.)

Example of obedience

What is the sealing power for? It is to enable the family to be together after this life. Who wants the

family unit to end at death? Our happiness and joy is in our families. But how do we get this major blessing? Obedience—obedience to the requirements of the restored church of Jesus Christ.

In the Brazil São Paulo South Mission there was an Elder Malheiros who entered into the field not being able to read or write very proficiently. He was even a little fearful of giving a prayer in public. But this young man, according to his mission president, Wilford Cardon, became one of the very greatest missionaries imaginable. The president asked him toward the end of his mission how he had turned into such a dynamic, very successful missionary. (He had baptized more than two hundred people and had baptized every week for fifty-two consecutive weeks.) In a very humble manner Elder Malheiros answered, "Well, president, I never doubted you. You said one could baptize every week, so I knew I could baptize every week. I never doubted. It was not always easy, *but I tried to obey.*"

Why was Brother Saraiva, the president of the Guaratingatá Branch, successful as a missionary? He heard Elder Gordon B. Hinckley at a stake conference in Brazil, in which Elder Hinckley challenged the people to bring one hundred people into the Church that year. And so Brother Saraiva said, "Why not? If a member of the Twelve says it can be done, *I will obey.*" The last time I spoke with Brother Saraiva, he had baptized more than two hundred fifty people.

Why is Floriano Oliveira, a member of the high council in a stake in Brazil, so successful as a missionary? Because he *obeyed* the Lord's counsel to open his mouth and share the gospel. One day as he was driving through the congested traffic of São Paulo he took his eyes off the road for but a second and crashed into the car in front of him.

He jumped out of the vehicle, hurried up to the car he had hit, opened the door and said, "I am so sorry I hit you. It was all my fault. I accept the full blame and will pay the total costs. I had no intention to do this, so please forgive me. Yet if I hadn't hit you, you wouldn't have received this message I have for you, the message that you have waited for all your life." He then explained the restoration of the gospel to this man, who was a medical doctor, and the man joined the Church two weeks later. Why has Brother Oliveira had so much success in baptizing more than two hundred people? Obedience—*obedience to the request of the Lord.*

In Alma 57 we read about the 2,060 sons of Helaman who fought valiantly in many wars, administering death to all who opposed them and the Church. Yet not one lost his life because they knew "that if they did not doubt, God would deliver them." (Alma 56:47.)

In Alma 57:21 we read: "Yea, and they did *obey and observe to perform every word of command with exactness.*" (Italics added.) *They were totally obedient.* Hence, they had unbelievable protection and success.

Disobedience

Let us for a moment look at some examples of disobedience, even men who had righteous intent but nevertheless disobeyed. One example would be Uzza in 1 Chronicles 13:7-10. The people had been warned not to touch the ark, the symbol of the covenant. But when the oxen stumbled and the ark appeared to be falling, Uzza stretched forth his hand to steady it and was immediately killed by the Lord. Uzza seemed justified and today we think his punishment was very severe, but as President David O. McKay stated, this incident conveys a lesson of life: obedience—full obedience.

May I give an example of one great man, chosen of God, who showed some disobedience and lost everything of importance: King Saul.

The Lord gave Saul a particular assignment: Destroy the people of Amalek! "Now go and smite Amalek and utterly destroy all that they have, and spare them not; but slay both man and woman, infant and suckling, ox and sheep, camel and ass." (1 Sam. 15:3.) It was a mighty army that Saul took to destroy the Amalekites—210,000 men.

"But Saul and the people spared [King] Agag, and the best of the sheep, and of the oxen, and of the fatlings, and the lambs, and all that was good, and would not utterly destroy them." (1 Sam. 15:9.)

Saul failed. Angered by this disobedience, the Lord sent Samuel again to upbraid the king.

"Samuel said, What meaneth then this bleating of the sheep in mine ears, and the lowing of the oxen which I hear?

"And Saul said, They have brought them from the Amalekites: for the people spared the best of the sheep and of the oxen, *to sacrifice unto the Lord thy God*; and the rest we have utterly destroyed.

"And Samuel said, Hath the Lord as great delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices, as in obeying the voice of the Lord? Behold, *to obey is better than sacrifice*. . . .

"Because thou hast rejected the word of the Lord, he hath also rejected thee from being king." (1 Sam. 15:14-15, 22-23; italics added.)

Why obey?

Today President Kimball is the Lord's mouthpiece on the earth, and when he says we should do certain things, even small things, what is our answer? For example, if he says clean up your yard—do it. If he says paint your fence—do it. If he says one more endowment per person per

year—do it. If he says at least one more couple per ward in the mission field—do it. If he says to avoid commercial purchases whenever possible on Sunday—do it. What blessings we must impede through lack of full obedience!

Now, *why obey?* In Deuteronomy it states, "Thou shalt keep therefore his statutes, and his commandments, which I command thee this day." Now, why: "*that it may go well with thee, and with thy children after thee, and that thou mayest prolong thy days upon the earth, which the Lord thy God giveth thee, for ever.*" (Deut. 4:40.)

And again in the Doctrine and Covenants, section 98: "And again I say unto you, if ye observe to do whatsoever I command you, I, the Lord, *will turn away all wrath and indignation from you, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against you.*" (D&C 98:22.)

Let's just cite one more example where the Lord watched over and protected his Saints in the Church. This is found in the *History of the Church*: There were threats of a mob on June 19, 1834. As the Mormons were making camp, five men rode up and told them that they would "see hell before morning." They stated that an armed force from Richmond, Ray, and Clay counties was to join a Jackson County force at the Fishing River ford, bent on the utter destruction of the camp.

While these five men were in the camp, cursing and swearing vengeance, signs of an approaching storm were seen. No sooner had these men left the camp than the storm burst forth in all its fury. Hailstones struck, so large that they cut limbs from the trees, and the limbs fell all around the camp while the trees were twisted from their roots by the force of the wind. The earth trembled and quaked, and the streams became raging torrents, and the mobbers dispersed, seeking shel-

ter that could not be found. One mobber was killed by lightning and another had his hand torn off by a fractious horse, and in fear they dispersed, saying that if that was the way God fought for the "Mormons" they would go about their business.

On the morning of June 21 (just two days later) Colonel Sconce, with two companions, visited the camp to learn what the intentions of the members were. He said: "I see there is an almighty power that protects this people, for I started from Richmond, Ray County, with a company of armed men, having a fixed determination to destroy you, but was kept back by the storm."

The Prophet then related to these men the sufferings of the Saints, and they left the camp offering to use their influence. (See *History of the Church*, 2:103-6.)

During all this storm the members of the camp were protected from its fury. Why were they protected? Because of their collective *obedience* to the Lord.

Let this be our decision: "Speak thou unto us all that the Lord our God shall speak unto thee; *and we will hear it, and do it.*" (Deut. 5:27.)

My true feelings about the Church are that I know in a definite, decisive, indelible manner that Jesus

is our Redeemer. He lives, as does the Father, and President Kimball is the living servant of the living God. Let us watch the prophet, listen to him, follow him, and we will never go astray. This is the only true church of Jesus Christ upon the face of the earth, to which I testify in the name of our Redeemer, amen.

President Romney

Elder Teddy E. Brewerton, a member of the First Quorum of the Seventy, has just addressed us.

The Choir and congregation will now join in singing "I Need Thee Every Hour." After the singing, Elder F. Burton Howard, a member of the First Quorum of the Seventy, will speak to us.

The Choir and congregation sang "I Need Thee Every Hour."

President Romney

We shall now be pleased to hear from Elder F. Burton Howard, a member of the First Quorum of the Seventy. We shall then hear from Elder Hartman Rector, Jr., a member of the First Quorum of the Seventy.

Elder F. Burton Howard

Concern for others

For many months I have been away from the headquarters of the Church. I have learned much and have come to understand better many things I had known before. I have observed firsthand the challenges which confront Church members as they endeavor to build the kingdom. I have seen the time and financial burdens borne by adults. I have sensed the preoccupation of parents for their children.

I have come to know that in this age of anxiety, and sometimes selfishness, there are not many of us willing to forego comforts or hard-earned security in order to concern ourselves with the welfare of others outside of our immediate circle of acquaintance. But *some* are—and *some do*. Everywhere I have been, I have met *some* faithful Saints who love, pray for, and watch over their fellowmen, both in and out of the Church. By means of a parable (I

believe I can call it that), I would like to speak to that comparative handful of God's children who have learned to *live* for others—and more particularly to those who have not.

Parable of the travelers

In a desert region one day, a number of travelers set out on a trip. It was hot and the journey was long. They had little in common except their shared desire to arrive at a distant city. Each carried provisions and water expecting to replenish their supplies along the way. Not long after leaving their homes, a great storm arose. Dust clouds darkened the sun, and the wind brought swirling sands which quickly filled the low places in the road. What at first had seemed a pleasant outing suddenly became a hazardous undertaking. The travelers soon realized that the question was not merely when they would arrive at the city, but whether they would arrive at all.

Confusion and doubt affected the company. Some sought shelter, while others attempted to turn back. A few moved onward through the storm. The end of the first day found them scattered, with inadequate provisions, wanting water, and lost in the desert. A new day brought hunger, thirst, and despair. The storm still raged. Hope was in short supply. Familiar landmarks were gone. The road, which had been narrow and hard to find, at best, was hidden by silt and debris. No one knew where to go to find it. Many claimed to know the way, but as they could not agree, each traveler wandered in his own way in search of water or the shelter of a settlement.

At the end of yet another day, two of the group, half-blinded by dust and with their strength nearly gone, came unexpectedly, with something more than good fortune, upon an inn and way station. There

in the sanctuary of walls and roof, they refreshed themselves and counted their blessings. There they replenished their stores and contemplated the remaining portion of their journey. The weather remained unsettled. The wind continued to blow. The poorly marked road wound ahead through hills where the sand piled deep and where it was said that robbers sometimes preyed upon unsuspecting travelers.

One of the two was anxious to reach his destination. He had important business in the city. He gathered his supplies and water and paid his account. Early in the morning he set out in haste in an attempt to cross the hill country by nightfall. But the windblown sand had blocked the road. He was forced to dig and detour. When night came, he was far from the city, exhausted and alone. When he fell asleep, thieves found him, took his supplies, and left him without strength and without water to face almost certain death.

The second traveler was also desirous of reaching his destination. But he remembered the others in the desert behind him. They were lost and would soon perish without water and without hope. He alone knew where they were. He alone knew their condition and their need. He likewise arose early and paid his account. He glanced at the hills with their promise of the city beyond, and then turned back down the road whence he had come. The sky was a little lighter now. He recognized some of the landmarks. He knew about where he had left his traveling companions. He called out to them by name, for he knew them. After hours of patient searching, he found many of them. He shared with them life-giving water from his own containers. He told them he knew the way. He spoke as if he had authority, so they followed him, and he brought them to the way station with him. There they rested and regained

their strength. They were given directions regarding how to reach the city. They renewed their provisions, filled their water containers, and went out again to face the storm.

The journey was still difficult. The wind still blew and clouds obscured the sun. The road still wound through the sometimes deep sand, and thieves were still in the hills. But this time the traveler was not alone. The group was large. When sand blocked the way, work parties were organized to remove it. When some faltered, the strong shouldered the burdens of the weak. When night came, there were watchmen to man the watch. After many days, the second man and his friends arrived safely at their destination.

When they arrived there, those who had been rescued and given water gathered around the second traveler and said, "We could not have come to this place without you. We shall ever be grateful to you for searching for us, for finding us, for sharing your water and your bread. We know that you put aside your own journey and submitted to the hardships of the desert in order to help us when we were lost. What can we do to repay you?"

And the second man replied, "Thank me not, for by no power of my own did I find the way station. The water there would have been bitter had I not shared it with you. I know that I could not have arrived at the city without you. Your strength and encouragement enabled me to continue on. Your presence prevented robbers from attacking. I have come to realize that in order to save my own life, I had to save yours as well. I know now that it is not so much the haste of one's journey but rather what he does along the way which determines whether he will arrive at his destination. Thank me not," he said. "In truth, I have not brought you to this place, we have brought one another."

We owe others

And so it is. None of us could have arrived at the point where we listen to and enjoy this great conference without others. Our testimonies, our greatest blessings, our membership and activity in Christ's church—all of these we owe to the often unremembered and always unnumbered hundreds who gave of their time and their patience and their love to us when we were trying to find our way in the desert. They brought living water to us, or to our parents, or to our parents' parents. Whether we know it or not, whether we like it or not, whether we are grateful or not, we are where we are because of others. We cannot say, indeed we must never say, "It was a difficult journey, but I have arrived. Let others get here as best they can. I don't have time now to take water to those who are lost. I have no obligation to those in the desert."

Save others and ourselves

The Lord is the director of the work in which we are engaged. He established the conditions upon which each man and woman will be privileged to return home.

He knows that sometimes clouds block the sun and that the road is hard to find. He must know how difficult it is just to get there. Can He reasonably expect us to try to bring others who are lost with us as well?

The answer is clear. To what else did He refer when He said, "All things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them?" (Matt. 7:12.) Surely He had in mind our obligations to others when He spoke of lost sheep and living water. If the parable of the good Samaritan has application anywhere, it must apply to one who, having the gospel, encounters another in need without it. But lest there be any doubt, the Lord has directed

plain language to the Latter-day Saints. His words in the Doctrine and Covenants are pointed: "The gospel is unto all who have not received it. But, verily I say unto all those to whom the kingdom *has* been given—from *you* it *must* be preached unto *them*." (D&C 84:75-76; italics added.)

What directions has He given to help us arrive at our destination? Once again, He has clearly spoken through a modern prophet: "And now, behold, I say unto you, that the thing which will be of the *most* worth unto you will be to declare repentance unto this people, that *you* may bring souls unto me, that *you* may rest with *them* in the kingdom of my Father." (D&C 15:6; italics added.) For, as he spoke to the dis-

ciples of old, "As I have loved you, . . . love one another." (John 13:34.)

My brothers and sisters, may we better understand the duties associated with our discipleship, I pray humbly in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, amen.

President Romney

Elder F. Burton Howard, a member of the First Quorum of the Seventy, has just spoken to us.

We shall now be pleased to hear from Elder Hartman Rector, Jr., also a member of the First Quorum of the Seventy. He will be followed by Elder Bruce R. McConkie, a member of the Council of the Twelve Apostles.

Elder Hartman Rector, Jr.

I consider it a great honor and a privilege to greet you this afternoon. I am sure the Lord is much concerned about the families of the earth today.

Family is under attack

The family is the basic unit of society, and more importantly it is the basic unit of exaltation. It seems that nothing is more important to the Lord than a family. He has designed the greatest blessings for His children to be received through families, and the temple, of course, is the means of creating these eternal, exalted families.

I believe that families are under a more serious attack today than at any time since the beginning of the world, with the possible exception of the days of Noah. It must have been bad then too. Maybe we today are not quite as bad as they were. Moses recorded in the Book of Genesis: "And God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and

that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually." (Gen. 6:5.) I don't believe I have ever known anyone quite that bad, whose "every thought was evil continually."

The Lord further indicated that all flesh was corrupt in those days, and so he brought forth the flood and destroyed all flesh except Noah and his family. Therefore, we are all descendants of righteous Noah. But the family concept is under very serious attack today all over the world.

The Lord said from Mt. Sinai, "Honour thy father and thy mother: that thy days may be long upon the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee." (Ex. 20:12.)

We seem to have conditions today similar to those Noah faced; and the Lord speaks of smiting the earth with a curse, as happened at the time of the flood, and this will happen if there is not a turning of "the heart of the fathers to the children, and the heart of the children to their fathers." (Mal. 4:6.)

There are those who feel that this turning of the hearts is strictly Elijah's job, but in Doctrine and Covenants 98:16 the Lord seems to give us that assignment. He said, "Seek diligently to turn the hearts of the children to their fathers, and the hearts of the fathers to the children."

Elijah came and delivered the keys, but the Lord looks to us to do the work. In a little plainer translation of the Malachi scripture, the Lord said:

"Behold, I will reveal unto you the Priesthood, by the hand of Elijah the prophet, before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord.

"And he shall plant in the hearts of the children the promises made to the fathers, and the hearts of the children shall turn to their fathers.

"If it were not so, the whole earth would be utterly wasted at his coming." (D&C 2:1-3; see also JS-H 1:38-39.)

Follow living prophet

We, then, are in the very serious business of attempting to save the earth or to keep it from being "wasted" when the Lord comes. This earth was created so God the Father would have a place to send His children to receive bodies of flesh and bones and prove themselves. If we will no longer permit the Lord to send his children to this earth, then the earth is wasted, and as in the days of the flood He will surely destroy it.

So what must we do? We must follow the living prophet, for herein is our only safety. He says, among other things:

1. Complete four-generation family records and as far beyond as you can go.

2. Write a personal and family history.

3. Perform a reasonable number of temple ordinances by attending the temple as often as is practical.

Personal and family histories

I personally believe that the writing of personal and family histories will do more to turn the hearts of the children to the fathers and the fathers to children than almost anything we can do. I am sure you will never turn your own children's hearts more to you than you will by keeping a journal and writing your personal history. They will ultimately love to find out about your successes and your failures and your peculiarities. It will tell them a lot about themselves, too. They will get a great desire to raise a family of their own when they see what a great blessing they were to you.

Also, I seriously doubt that you will ever turn your own heart more to your own fathers than by writing your family history. You must know a lot about them before you can write it. This will lead you to much in-depth research. I promise you will love them when you become acquainted with them. They were noble people, and they sacrificed much to give you the heritage you have today. They deserve the best you can give them, which of course is membership in the Church and the kingdom of God and the sealing of their loved ones to them.

I am convinced that these records we are commanded to write are absolutely vital, not only to the salvation of our ancestors but also to ours, for are we not to be judged out of the books which John saw were to be opened, as recorded in Revelation 20:12?

"And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works."

After quoting this verse from Revelation, the Prophet Joseph Smith

said, as recorded in Doctrine and Covenants 128:7-8:

"You will discover in this quotation that the *books* were opened; and another book was opened, which was the book of life; but the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the *books*, according to their works; consequently, the *books* spoken of must be the books which contained the record of their works, and refer to the records which are kept on the earth. . . .

"Now, the nature of this ordinance consists in the power of the priesthood, by the revelation of Jesus Christ, wherein it is granted that whatsoever you bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatsoever you loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven. Or, in other words, taking a different view of the translation, whatsoever you record on earth shall be recorded in heaven, and whatsoever you do not record on earth shall not be recorded in heaven; for out of the *books* shall your dead be judged." (*Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith*, comp. Joseph Fielding Smith, Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1977, p. 356; italics added.)

Sometimes we feel we just don't have time to write in our journals. I wonder. President Kimball stood before the World Conference on Records last August and said: "By now, in my own personal history, I have managed to fill seventy-eight large volumes, which are my personal journal. There have been times when I have been so tired at the end of a day that the effort could hardly be managed, but I am so grateful that I have not let slip away from me and my posterity those things which needed to be recorded." (*ENSIGN*, Oct. 1980, p. 72.)

Savior on Mount Zion

"The greatest responsibility in this world that God has laid upon us is to seek after our dead. Those saints who neglect it in behalf of their deceased relatives, do it at the peril of their own salvation." (*Teachings of the Prophet*, p. 193.)

To become a savior on Mount Zion, then, goes far beyond the performance of the temple ordinance. It encompasses the personal and family history as well as the four-generation-and-beyond research—plus participation in the extraction program.

Of course, none of this would mean very much if we did not have a holy house in which to perform this work. In this sense, temple building then becomes the most important work of this dispensation. How glorious to live upon the earth at this time and have part in the grand work of rearing the Lord's house in nations around the world so the saving ordinances of the gospel and the ties that bind eternal families may be made available to all the children of the earth! Surely we are the most blessed people who have ever lived, to which I bear witness in the name of the Lord, Jesus Christ, amen.

President Romney

Elder Hartman Rector, Jr., a member of the First Quorum of the Seventy, has just addressed us.

Elder Bruce R. McConkie, a member of the Council of the Twelve Apostles, will be our next speaker. He will be followed by President Spencer W. Kimball, President of the Church, who will be our concluding speaker.

Elder Bruce R. McConkie

A Friend's counsel

I have a Friend of blessed memory whose name I hold in awe and from whom I have learned more than from any other person. If I may be guided by the Spirit, I shall tell you some of the great truths he has taught me.

He delivered what is probably the greatest sermon ever to fall from mortal lips. It was on a mountain near Capernaum, his own city, many years ago.

His wondrous words, then spoken to thousands of his Jewish friends, illuminated their souls with the light of heaven and ignited their whole beings with the fires of testimony. Never man spake as he did. And even now as we read and ponder the words of his mouth, our hearts burn within us.

As the climax of his Sermon on the Mount, he gave this counsel: "Whosoever heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them, I will liken him unto a wise man, which built his house upon a rock:

"And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell not: for it was founded upon a rock.

"And every one that heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them not, shall be likened unto a foolish man, which built his house upon the sand:

"And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell: and great was the fall of it." (Matt. 7:24-27.)

Every person born in this world builds a house of some sort and puts it on a foundation of his own choosing. And every house built in this mortal sphere is subject to the storms and strifes of life. Our mortal probation is one in which the divine purpose calls for rain and wind and floods.

We live in the midst of a swirling storm of sin. The rains of evil and the winds of false doctrine and the floods of carnality beat upon every house.

It is within our power to build a house of faith, a house of righteousness, a house of salvation.

We can, if we will, even build a house of God, a holy sanctuary, a temple of the living God. Indeed, every Latter-day Saint who is true and faithful has built for himself a "temple of God" in which "the Spirit of God dwelleth." And as Paul says: "If any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy; for the temple of God is holy, which temple ye are." (1 Cor. 3:16-17.)

If our house is built upon a rock with the brick and mortar of good works, it will withstand the storms and perils of life and preserve us for an eternal inheritance hereafter. If it is built upon the sands of evil with the rusty nails and rotting timber of carnal things, it will be destroyed when the rains and the winds and the floods beat upon it.

What think ye?

Let us then learn from our ancient Friend where and how he would have us build the house that shall be ours in the days of our flesh.

Let us look in upon a sweet and tender scene that took place near Caesarea Philippi up north of the Sea of Galilee and near Mount Hermon. Multitudes who but recently sought to crown him king and whose clamoring for earthly bread brought forth the rebuff in the Sermon on the Bread of Life—these multitudes have turned away.

The remaining little group of true and valiant believers upon whom our gaze falls are in need of spiritual refreshment. First they have prayers. Then Jesus testifies of his own divine

Sonship as he so often did during the days of his flesh.

He asks his disciples who men say that he, the Son of Man, is. (See Matt. 16:13.) The very question is itself a witness of his Godhood, for he knows and they know that his Father's name is Man of Holiness and that the name of his Only Begotten is the Son of Man of Holiness.

Their answers set forth the fantasies and delusions of an apostate people. Some, they say, accept the expressed views of evil Antipas who had slain the blessed Baptist whom he now thought had risen from the dead.

Others, they say, think he is Elias who should restore all things; or Elijah who should come before the great and dreadful day; or Jeremiah who, according to their foolish traditions, had hidden the ark of the covenant in a cave on Mount Nebo and would prepare the way for the Messiah by restoring it and the Urim and Thummim to the Holy of Holies.

Then comes the question to which every living soul must give proper answer if he is to gain salvation: "But whom say ye that I am?" (Matt. 16:15.) Ye Apostles of the Lord Jesus Christ, ye Saints of the Most High, ye devout souls who seek salvation: What think ye? Is salvation in Christ or look we for another? Let every man speak for himself!

On this occasion, first Simon Peter, then all the rest acclaim: "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God." (Matt 16:16.) Thou art the Promised Messiah; thou art the Only Begotten in the flesh; God is thy Father!

What a wondrous, awesome thing this is. As Paul said, "Great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory." (1 Tim. 3:16.)

And now near the foot of that

mountain in which he will soon be transfigured, the Son of Man, whose Father is divine, accepts and approves the solemn testimonies of his friends.

To Peter, Jesus says, "Blessed art thou, Simon Bar-jona." (Matt. 16:17.) How carefully and aptly Jesus preserves the distinction between him and all men. He is the Son of God; Peter is the son of Jonah. The Father of Jesus is the Immortal Man of Holiness; Peter's sire is a mortal man.

But why is Peter so blessed? It is because he knows by the power of the Holy Ghost that Jesus is the Lord; the Holy Spirit has spoken to the spirit housed in Simon's body, telling the chief Apostle of the divine Sonship of this Jesus of Nazareth of Galilee.

"Blessed art thou, Simon Bar-jona," Jesus says, "for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven." (Matt. 16:17.)

"Upon this rock"

Then again Jesus alludes to the difference in paternal ancestry between him and Peter and continues his words of blessing and doctrine by saying: "And upon this rock"—the rock of revelation—"I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." (Matt. 16:18.)

And how could it be otherwise? There is no other foundation upon which the Lord could build his Church and kingdom. The things of God are known only by the power of his Spirit. God stands revealed or he remains forever unknown. No man can know that Jesus is the Lord but by the Holy Ghost.

Revelation: Pure, perfect, personal revelation—this is the rock!

Revelation that Jesus is the Christ: the plain, wondrous word that comes from God in heaven to man on earth, the word that affirms the

divine Sonship of our Lord—this is the rock!

The divine sonship of our Lord: the sure, heaven-sent word that God is his Father and that he has brought life and immortality to light through the gospel—this is the rock!

The testimony of our Lord: the testimony of Jesus, which is the spirit of prophecy—this is the rock!

All this is the rock, and yet there is more. *Christ is the Rock:* the Rock of Ages, the Stone of Israel, the Sure Foundation—the Lord is our Rock!

Again we hear Paul's voice: "Other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ." (1 Cor. 3:11.) And also: Ye "are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone." (Eph. 2:20.)

Rock of personal revelation

As we ponder all these things, and as their full meaning dawns upon us, we hear anew the exhortation of our ancient Apostolic friend which says, "Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith; prove your own selves." (2 Cor. 13:5.) And so we ask ourselves: Shall the gates of hell prevail against us?

If we build our house of salvation on the rock of personal revelation, if we build it on the revealed reality that Jesus is the Lord, if we build it on him who is the Eternal Rock—it will stand forever.

If we are guided by the spirit of inspiration while here in mortality, we will be able to withstand all of the floods and storms that beat upon us.

If we are founded upon a rock, we worship the Father in the name of the Son by the power of the Holy Ghost.

If we are founded upon a rock, we know that salvation comes by the grace of God to those who believe

the gospel and keep the commandments.

If we are founded upon a rock, we forsake the world, flee from carnal things, and live upright and godly lives.

If we are founded upon a rock, the gates of hell shall not prevail against us. As long as we remain in our house of faith, we shall be preserved when the rains of evil fall, when the winds of false doctrine blow, and when the floods of carnality beat upon us.

Thanks be to God that we, as Latter-day Saints, are founded upon a rock. And so it is that the faithful among us hear a calm voice of quiet certainty saying: "If ye shall build up my church, upon the foundation of my gospel and my rock, the gates of hell shall not prevail against you. . . .

"Behold, you have my gospel before you, and my rock, and my salvation." (D&C 18:5, 17.)

And so we testify with Peter and with the ancients that we know, as they knew, those things which flesh and blood can never reveal to man. We know by the power of the Holy Ghost that Jesus Christ is the Son of the living God and that he was crucified for the sins of the world.

God grant that we may be true to Him by whose name alone salvation comes. He is our Friend, our Lord, our King, our God, and our Rock.

Testimony of holy apostleship

And may I add, speaking as an Apostle of the Lord, Jesus Christ, that mingled and intertwined with this testimony which we bear and which was borne by the ancients—and I speak for myself and for my Brethren of the Twelve—that we know that God has in these last days restored again the fulness of his everlasting gospel for the salvation of all men on earth who will believe and

obey; and that he has called Joseph Smith, Jr., to be his latter-day prophet, to be the first and chief Apostle in the dispensation of the fulness of times, and has given him every key and priesthood and power that Peter and the Apostles and the ancient prophets held in the days of their ministry; and that these keys and this holy Apostleship have descended in this manner: Joseph Smith, Brigham Young, John Taylor, Wilford Woodruff, Lorenzo Snow, Joseph F. Smith, Heber J. Grant, George Albert Smith, David O. McKay, Joseph Fielding Smith, Harold B. Lee, and Spencer W. Kimball; and that this holy Apostleship and these keys will continue to descend from one Apostle to another until the Lord Jesus Christ comes in the clouds of heaven to reign personally upon the earth. And this I say not of myself, but in the name of the Lord, standing as his representative and saying what he would say if he personally were here. His is the only name given under heaven whereby salvation comes, and we are his ministers. In the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, amen.

President Romney

Elder Bruce R. McConkie, a member of the Council of the Twelve Apostles, has just spoken to us.

President Spencer W. Kimball

My beloved brothers and sisters, this has been a glorious conference. We are grateful to all who have taken part in any way. My heart has been touched, and I have rejoiced and been inspired as I listened to the beautiful music and the timely messages of the Brethren.

We are happy to welcome Elder Angel Abrea as a member of the First Quorum of the Seventy. For the

Before hearing President Kimball's concluding remarks, we should like to express, on behalf of all who have listened to the singing during these sessions of this general conference, appreciation and our sincere gratitude to all the choirs that have performed and to their conductors and accompanists.

We appreciate the attention given by local and national press representatives and by representatives of radio and television in reporting the sessions of this conference.

We thank our city officials for the cooperation given this conference, the Relief Society and Church Health Unit nurses who have been on hand to render service throughout the conference, and the ushers and the interpreters.

We again express appreciation to the owners and managers of the many radio and television stations who have given public service time to carry sessions of this conference in many countries.

Our beloved prophet, President Spencer W. Kimball, will be our concluding speaker of the conference, after which the Tabernacle Choir will sing "God So Loved the World."

The benediction will be offered by Elder Ronald E. Poelman, a member of the First Quorum of the Seventy.

This conference will then stand adjourned for six months.

present, he will return to Rosario, Argentina, to continue his present assignment as president of that mission. He will add great strength and depth to the leadership of the Church as our newest General Authority.

Counsel to members

As Sister Kimball and I have traveled to many places of the world

these past six months, I have been heartened and gratified with the vitality and growth of the Church and the devotion and unselfish service of the members in the stakes, wards, and missions.

In this conference we have been counseled to conserve our resources and ease the financial burdens on our people. Again we urge the planting of home gardens and the maintenance of a year's supply of food and clothing against a time of need.

We urge all Latter-day Saints to be good neighbors and to be good citizens, loyal to their flag and country. "We believe in being subject to kings, presidents, rulers, and magistrates, in obeying, honoring, and sustaining the law." (Twelfth article of faith.) All Americans, and indeed people throughout the civilized world, were shocked and saddened last week when an attempt was made to assassinate the president of the United States, at which time he and three others near him were seriously wounded. I am confident all of you join with me in a fervent prayer that President Reagan and his associates will speedily return to full health and strength. We deplore such acts of violence wherever they may occur in the world.

During this conference we have focused on the basic mission of the Church. We have been counseled to manage the growth of the Church "in wisdom and order." (Mosiah 4:27.) We have been urged to qualify ourselves to receive all the ordinances and blessings of the gospel by keeping the commandments, doing our duty, and paying a true tithe and generous fast offerings.

Temples throughout the world

As we have met in this historic Tabernacle and have contemplated things of eternity, it has seemed as though time has stood still even though outside world events are moving at a rapid pace.

I rejoice with you in the announcement of plans to build nine new temples in the United States, Latin America, Asia, Africa, and Europe. When these new temples are completed and dedicated in approximately two years, the total number of temples worldwide will increase to thirty-seven. We are pleased to be able to provide more convenient access to the temples for the Saints because many now have to travel long distances at great expense in time and money to get to the nearest temple.

But these temples are only the beginning. As the work progresses, there will be scores of temples throughout the world.

The other day, we were pleased to visit with a number of brethren attending conference from Korea. And as we met together, they told us of their great joy on hearing of our plans for a temple in Korea. They had previously presented to us Korean clan genealogies containing names of approximately fifteen million people.

This is His work

We are all very much aware, my brothers and sisters, that the world is in turmoil. We are continually being tried and tested as individuals and as a church. There are more trials yet to come, but be not discouraged nor dismayed. Always remember that if this were not the Lord's work, the adversary would not pay any attention to us. If this Church were merely a church of men and women, teaching only the doctrines of men, we would encounter little or no criticism or resistance—but because this is the Church of Him whose name it bears, we must not be surprised when criticisms or difficulties arise. With faith and good works, the truth will prevail. This is His work. There is none other like it. Let us, therefore, press for-

ward, lengthening our stride and rejoicing in our blessings and opportunities.

As we come to the close of this great conference, I wish to say to you, my brothers and sisters, that we love you with all our hearts. We appreciate all that you do, but of course, as always, there is even more to do. The field is white, all ready to harvest, but the time is so short and the laborers are so few as we seek to share the gospel with our Father's other children in all parts of the world.

We ask our Heavenly Father to give you power to extend your knowledge to the people in your neighborhood who need it and to take the gospel to areas in the world that need those great blessings now more than ever.

Testimony

My brethren and sisters, I testify to you that this is the Lord's work and that it is true. We are on the Lord's errand. This is His church and He is its head and the chief cornerstone. God lives, and Jesus is the Christ. He is the Only Begotten Son, the Savior and Redeemer of this world. I leave you with this testimony and with my blessings and my love and affection, in the name of Jesus Christ, amen.

The Choir sang "God So Loved the World."

Elder Ronald E. Poelman offered the benediction.

GENERAL WELFARE SESSION SATURDAY MORNING

A general welfare services session was held in connection with general conference on Saturday, April 4, 1981, beginning at 7:00 A.M. Invited to attend this session were General Authorities, Regional Representatives, stake presidencies, high councilors involved in welfare work, bishoprics, stake and ward Relief Society presidencies, and others responsible for operating welfare production projects.

President Spencer W. Kimball presided at and conducted this session.

President Kimball opened the meeting with the following remarks:

President Spencer W. Kimball

Beloved brothers and sisters, we welcome you to this general welfare services meeting.

Under the direction of Jerold Ottley with Roy Darley at the organ, we shall begin this meeting by singing hymn no. 195, "Redeemer of Israel." The invocation will be offered by Elder Robert D. Hales, a member of the First Quorum of the Seventy.

The congregation sang "Redeemer of Israel."

The invocation was given by Elder Robert D. Hales.

President Spencer W. Kimball

Pioneer character molded in crucible

My beloved brothers and sisters: As I have pondered the social and economic conditions which confront us today, my thoughts have taken me back to our pioneer heritage. Our people have always been challenged by many and varied hardships which have tried our faith. It has been so from the beginning.

During the winter of 1846-47, when the Saints were at Winter Quarters preparing for their long and difficult trek across the plains, my grandfather, Heber C. Kimball, for twenty-one years a counselor to Brigham Young, was one of them. During that winter the Lord declared in a revelation to President Young, "My people must be *tried* in all things, that they may be prepared to receive the glory that I have for them, even the glory of Zion; and he that will not bear chastisement is not worthy of my kingdom." (D&C 136:31; italics added.)

Few miracles in our history exceed that of establishing our settlements in a desolate land no one else wanted and then making the desert blossom as a rose. Our people not only survived but flourished because of their *faith* and their *family solidarity*. Our pioneer character was molded in the crucible of hard work, sacrifice, pulling together, and depending upon the Lord.

How well I remember my boyhood years in Arizona. Our living came from the soil. There was little money and seldom enough to go around. Going without and making do was our way of life. We learned to share; we shared the work; we shared joys and sorrows; we shared our food and our means. We had genuine concern for one another. Our daily prayers reminded us how dependent we are upon the Lord. We

prayed and worked continually for our daily bread.

Need for pioneer discipline

Out of those pioneer experiences were formed strong family ties. Now, once again, our resources are being severely strained. But once again our pioneer discipline can and will see us through.

Though we have held these welfare sessions over the years, we have never held one at a time more important than right now. As we concern ourselves with the basic economic needs of our people, we must go back to basic principles. I am grateful for the lessons of our pioneer past in which our people were rich, spiritually, even though they had to do without much of this world's goods.

Those of us in the Lord's work must recognize that work is a spiritual necessity as well as an economic necessity. Our pioneer forebears understood this.

Just as the pioneers shared what they had with the poor among them, we must do likewise by the giving of more generous fast offerings—not merely the cost of two meals.

Our pioneer ancestors did not look to government to care for their families. They knew that their families were their treasure and their own responsibility.

Follow the fundamentals

Brethren and sisters, plan and work in a way that will permit you to be happy even as you do without certain things that in times of affluence may have been available to you. Live within your means and not beyond them. Where you have a plot of land, however small, plant a garden. Staying close to the soil is good

for the soul. Purchase your essentials wisely and carefully. Strive to save a portion of that which you earn. Do not mistake many wants for basic needs.

Teach your children these basic principles in your family councils. Our pioneer forebears used to sing those lyrics about how "sacrifice brings forth the blessings of heaven." (*Hymns*, no. 147.) It still does, my brothers and sisters! Let us not forget the uses of adversity.

Let us be serene and filled with peace and love as we live in a world that is unfortunately filled with increasing crime and violence. Let us remember and keep the Lord's great commandment to love our neighbors. Where there are differences or misunderstandings, let us resolve or diminish them through kindly, brotherly service and genuine concern and regard.

We speak not by way of alarm

but by way of gentle counsel. Let us go back to the basics and follow the fundamentals. Thus we will experience a spiritual resurgence in our lives which will help us through these tempestuous times.

I am grateful for the welfare instructions we receive in this session of our conference. They are timely and worthy of both our attention and our action. May the Lord bless us to heed them and then to lead our people in the path that has been marked for us by our leaders and by the Lord, I humbly pray, in the name of Jesus Christ, amen.

President Kimball

We shall now be pleased to hear from Bishop H. Burke Peterson, First Counselor in the Presiding Bishopric. He will be followed by Sister Barbara B. Smith, General President of the Relief Society.

Bishop H. Burke Peterson

This morning I've been asked to speak about the responsibilities families have to care for their own. This counsel will apply to the immediate as well as to the extended family. The scriptural admonition outlining this charge is clear.

Do things of eternal worth

However, before going into the subject, I wish to build a threshold from which to enter these hallowed halls of family responsibility. As we walk through life, each of us becomes involved in a variety of interests and activities. Ofttimes, our judgment of their relative importance is subject to question. I fear that some of what we do is of little worth from an eternal perspective. In fact, some of our interests may even detract from what good we may otherwise accomplish. There are some ba-

sic, fundamental activities of life that are far more productive as preparatory steps for exaltation than many others with which we may busy ourselves. Some of our number have been known to be busily engaged in the "thick of thin things." The Master undoubtedly was speaking of this group as he taught us with the parable of the ten virgins.

Here were ten believing members of the Church. They believed enough that they were going, as a body, to meet the Bridegroom. It appears that they were not wicked, as we think of that descriptive term. I assume they had spent their lives, to that point, in "church activity"; however, as in the parable, five of them had been doing things of more import than had the other five. Half of them had been involved during their lives in doing things of consequence—in doing things that mat-

tered most—in preparing oil for their lamps.

In speaking of the foolish, the parable states, "And while they went to buy, the bridegroom came; and they that were ready went in with him to the marriage: and the door was shut." (Matt. 25:10.)

Serve one another

With this as a warning and the word of the Lord instructing us to be about more important things, I'd like to remind us of the teachings of one of the great Book of Mormon prophets and missionaries, Alma.

In one of the most important declarations of what it means to be a true disciple of the Master, Alma describes in clarity and simplicity the covenant and responsibility of one who would enter the waters of baptism. We have all entered the water. We have made the covenant. In the eighteenth chapter of Mosiah, Alma describes the conduct of a true follower of the Savior, a true disciple. For he said, "And now, as ye are desirous to come into the fold of God, and to be called his people, and are willing to bear one another's burdens, that they may be light;

"Yea, and are willing to mourn with those that mourn; yea, and comfort those that stand in need of comfort, and to stand as witnesses of God at all times and in all things." (Mosiah 18:8-9.)

He has stated simply: If we are to be the Savior's disciples, if we are to become like him, then we must serve one another, then we must assume responsibility to help with one another's needs, then we must assist each other through the thorny pathways of life.

We have been taught in other scripture that no matter how great and significant our mortal accomplishments, no matter how much was accomplished under our hand—as a bishop, a clerk, a president, a

teacher, or a parent—unless we learn to exhibit charity, we are nothing. (See 1 Cor. 13:1-3.) All our good deeds will not weigh in our favor if charity is lacking.

Charity is measured in several ways. Perhaps a supreme form of charity may be exhibited by one who withholds judgment of another's acts or conduct, remembering that there is only one who can look into the heart and know the intent—and know the honest desires found therein. There is only one whose right it is to judge the success of another's journey through life. Uncalled-for judgments or prejudiced feelings keep many from displaying a truly charitable attitude or a willingness to help those in need, even those in our own family circle. A warning comes to us from King Benjamin, who said:

"And also, ye yourselves will succor those that stand in need of your succor; ye will administer of your substance unto him that standeth in need; and ye will not suffer that the beggar putteth up his petition to you in vain, and turn him out to perish."

"Perhaps thou shalt say: The man has brought upon himself his misery; therefore I will stay my hand, and will not give unto him of my food, nor impart unto him of my substance that he may not suffer, for his punishments are just—

"But I say unto you, O man, whosoever doeth this the same hath great cause to repent; and except he repenteth of that which he hath done he perisheth forever, and hath no interest in the kingdom of God." (Mosiah 4:16-18.)

Care for our own

Are not our own family members entitled to every consideration as contained in this counsel? Too often, charity is extended to another when his actions or conduct are acceptable to us. The exhibition of charity to

another must not be dependent on his performance. It should be given because of who we are—not because of how we behave.

Now, with these thoughts in mind, let's remember again Alma's words as they describe the acts of a true disciple. He is one who is:

- willing to bear another's burdens,

- willing to mourn with those that mourn,

- willing to comfort.

Brothers and sisters, of all the places where our charitable acts should shine forth, where our discipleship must rise above the weaknesses of self, the family is the most important place. There is no other setting that comes close in comparison. Yet many—far too many—are more charitable to others than to their own.

From the content of this message, I'm sure you can tell we have great concern about the manner in which we, as families, are caring for the needs of each other. Much has been said from this pulpit about the responsibility we have to look after our own. The words are clear. We fear the understanding and application of these principles are not being followed as the Lord has prescribed.

In his day, President Brigham Young said the following: "Ever since I have been in this Church I have never suffered a relative to be maintained by the Church. But some men and women cast their children and other relatives upon the Church. If one has an aged sister who cannot maintain herself, he passes her over to the Church; or if an aged father or mother, why, 'let the Church . . . take care of them and provide for them.' It is a disgrace to every man and woman that has sense enough to live, not to take care of their own relatives, their own poor, and plan for them." (*Journal of Discourses*, 8:145.)

Fearing that we may have strayed from some of the basic moorings, I would like to quote from the welfare handbook some of us used as bishops over twenty years ago:

"Aid from Relatives:

"Obviously no person should become a charge upon the public [or the Church] when his relatives are able to care for him. Every consideration of kinship, of justice and fairness, of the common good, and even of humanity itself, requires this." Then listen to these words: "Where Church relatives, financially competent to take care of their kin, refuse to do so, the matter should be reported to the bishop of the ward in which such relatives reside." (*Welfare Plan of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*, Handbook of Instructions, 1969, p. 4.)

And then the handbook repeats the instruction of the Apostle Paul to Timothy: "But if any provide not for his own, and specially for those of his own house, he hath denied the faith, and is worse than an infidel." (1 Tim. 5:8.)

Family needs are both physical and spiritual

Perhaps we should clarify what it means to provide for our own. How do we do it? Does it mean money and other physical things only? Are there unmet needs that money cannot buy?

As we talk of family support, often our thoughts center mostly on physical comforts. Food, clothing, and shelter seem uppermost in our minds. Well it is that many parents assist newly married children in their first years of learning to manage limited funds. Often brothers and sisters likewise assist each other. Many sons and daughters are offering much of a temporal nature to their aging parents and grandparents. And so it should be, and blessed will be those who so provide for their own.

Family needs, however, are not always physical. Often faith, forgiveness, encouragement, comfort, counsel, listening, teaching, moral support, examples of loving and caring, and a host of other experiences will see loved ones through a crisis—and their crisis needs may last a lifetime. Time with a family member may pay the greatest dividends of all.

The story is told of a family who had a grandmother who had to live in a home for the elderly. Once each year they would visit her. On that occasion, they would take her a new blanket. As they were returning home from one such visit, one of the father's young sons asked, "Daddy, why do we visit grandmother every year?"

The father answered, "So she will know that we love her."

Another question: "Daddy, why do we bring her a new blanket every time?"

The father answered, "So she will remember that we've been here and that we have not forgotten her."

Then a pause. "Daddy, what color blanket would you like when I come to visit you?"

There is no righteous way to avoid the commandment "Honour thy father and thy mother." (Ex. 20:12.) No family that hopes to endure eternally can exclude grandmother and grandfather, brothers and sisters, or other relatives. Heaven forbid that any family member—regardless of age—should be considered a burden. Wouldn't it be wonderful if family members would counsel together as they make plans to assist those in need?

Families can cause miracles to happen

Because of some personal experiences, I am a true believer that families who will fast and pray together can cause miracles to happen. They can literally pray righteous things to take place. Ofttimes it may take longer than we feel is necessary before it happens, however.

To those who are not members of a "typical" LDS family—and there are many—may we offer a reminder that we are all literally brothers and sisters. We are members of that heavenly family. These principles apply to all. The faithful will be blessed for obedience.

In an earlier day, when families refused to obey the charge of family responsibility—when they found ways to justify their acts of non-compliance with the law—the Master said:

"Ye hypocrites, well did Esaias prophesy of you, saying,

"This people draweth nigh unto me with their mouth, and honoureth me with their lips; but their heart is far from me.

"But in vain they do worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men." (Matt. 15:7-9.)

This morning we have given you what the Lord has said. We may use our agency as to whether we shall obey or disobey; but, if we disobey, we must abide the penalty.

I testify of the truth of these teachings and of the reality of the one who is the author, in the name of Jesus Christ, amen.

Sister Barbara B. Smith

Need to be resourceful

President Kimball, President Tanner, President Romney, my be-

loved Brethren, and my dear brothers and sisters: Few people are untouched today by economic stress. We're not only confronted with it in the media,

but we experience it with virtually every purchase we make.

Most Saturday afternoons my husband and I make a trip to the grocery store for our weekly supplies and food storage items. Recently, after filling our shopping cart and while waiting to be checked out, we watched the cashier totaling the purchases of customers ahead of us. Nearly all were in sizable double-digit figures. We discussed the high cost of food for large families with limited incomes, elderly people with small pensions, and single parents often with uncertain means. We concluded that in most households resources must be managed very carefully in order to meet current demands.

The economic situation today is sobering. It requires us as women to be very resourceful if we are to meet this challenge successfully and at the same time find satisfaction in doing it well.

Reach for the stars

A young bride went to be with her husband at an army camp on the edge of a desert. Housing was scarce and costly. All they could afford was a small cabin near an Indian village. The 115-degree heat was unbearable in the daytime. The wind blew constantly, spreading dust and sand over everything. The days were long and lonely. When her husband was ordered into the desert for two weeks of maneuvers, she just couldn't bear the living conditions any longer, and she wrote to her mother that she was coming home. An almost immediate reply included these lines:

*Two men look out from prison bars;
One saw the mud, the other saw the
stars.*

She read the lines over and over. All right, she would look for the stars.

She determined to make friends with her neighbors, the Indians. She admired their artful weaving and pottery work and asked them to teach her. As soon as they sensed her interest was genuine, they were most willing. She became fascinated with their culture, their history—everything about them. The desert changed from a desolate, forbidding place to a world of wondrous beauty.

What had changed? Not the desert, not her environment; her own attitude transformed a miserable experience into a highly rewarding one. (From *Bits and Pieces*, Vol. C no. 5, pp. 21-23.)

How might Relief Society enable a woman to look to the stars—stars to steer by? How might Relief Society enable a woman to create an environment of optimism and adventure, while at the same time helping her stretch her dollars and resources by implementing sound economic principles in the home?

Home and money management

Let me point out a few mini-courses each Relief Society unit might hold to help women meet this challenge:

First, home and money management. Wise home and money management instruction should help each sister learn how to bring all expenditures within the family income. It has been thoughtfully said that we should set our scale of living one degree below our means. No longer can we ignore the imperative of this principle.

The first hard rule of fixing our scale of living below our means is to budget, planning first for basic needs and then for other desired items.

We should help all women enjoy the peace of mind that comes from making and following a plan for spending. Their lives will begin to have an aura of serenity when their expenses stay within their income.

Women must learn to budget and to help their children learn to budget also. Women and children should know that, no matter how important or how worthwhile an item might seem to be, if they cannot afford it, it is an unwise expenditure. Such expenditures lead to debt; and unwise debt leads to economic insecurity, which most often causes stress in the family. You can make it easier for your children if you do as Elder Marvin J. Ashton suggests: " 'Save your money' is a hollow pronouncement from a parent to a child. 'Save your money for a mission, a bicycle, a doll house, a trousseau, or a car' makes understandable sense." (ENSIGN, July 1975, p. 73.)

Living on a budget is not a chore. It need not even be a deprivation. Budgeting should be a great learning experience.

A recently married daughter of a friend wrote her mother, describing how she and her husband were managing to save money on their meager income. She excitedly explained: "I've discovered that often prepared foods are too costly for our budget, so I make most things from 'scratch.' The other night at Relief Society I even learned how to make milk, buttermilk, condensed milk, cottage cheese, yogurt, and creamed cheese from the powdered milk we had stored. It's fun to see how much I can save by doing things myself."

We can teach women to be realistic in money management and still maintain a spirit of resourcefulness and optimism.

Resource management

Next, a resource management minicourse might be planned. It could enable the sisters to share ways to save energy. For example, car pool or walk whenever possible, wear sweaters, turn down the thermostat a degree or two, open shades

when the sun shines and close them at night, turn off the heat or air conditioner when not at home, turn off the lights, and run the dishwasher only with a full load.

Resource management includes wise stewardship of possessions and an appreciation of the value that still remains in some used goods. One stake Relief Society president reported a homemaking meeting where their best seamstress was available to help each woman draft patterns for reusable fabric. This helped the sisters save many dollars and at the same time enjoy lovely additional clothing items.

Other miniclasses on resource management might focus on ways to take better care of clothes—how best to repair, clean, and alter them for longer wear. A minicourse on laundering tips could also add to a woman's understanding of how to add life to fabric. Classes could teach the art of clothing coordination, how to add variety and versatility to everyone's wardrobe so there is less need to purchase complete outfits. In these and other ways Relief Society could teach women to care better for their belongings, thus extending life and serviceability while at the same time bringing satisfaction and pleasure.

If we "make do" creatively, we don't have to do without. We can enrich the lives of our family members at very little cost.

Healthful living

A third minicourse might be on healthful living. Plan ways to help the sisters save money by attaining the best health of which they are capable. Relief Society should provide training to promote physical well-being as the least expensive medical treatment. It doesn't even cost you the price of aspirin. The illness you avoid costs nothing. Good health habits save money. To promote good

health, women need to plan nutritious meals. Most of us could have smaller portions of food and still be healthy, but all of us should eat regular, well-balanced meals each day. Relief Society instruction should be designed to help sisters understand and practice the fundamentals of good nutrition. We should learn to prepare economical food that will be both nourishing and appealing. And in keeping with the all-Church effort to reduce cost, we would like to suggest that, although the homemaking meeting continue to be held monthly, the homemaking luncheon be served only six times per year, unless the circumstances of the sisters indicate a special need. We ask each Relief Society president to realize that this is not a time for cookies and punch, but for a social experience that will promote provident living, and that the emphasis be on an economical, nourishing food graciously served that can be easily duplicated in the homes of the sisters.

Emergency preparation

One basic concept of the welfare system of the Church is to prepare for a time of emergency by careful planning. Relief Society has the capability of helping sisters further this effort by making their homes models of provident living that can meet present need and possible emergencies.

I have thought about the emergency preparation necessary when Noah's ark was made ready. Noah must have achieved the most effective welfare planning in the history of mankind when he very carefully followed the Lord's counsel and built the ark. His wife and their sons un-

doubtedly worked and planned with him so that the blessings of the Lord might be theirs. Just think of preparing a year's supply for those multitudes of animals which were brought into the ark. Noah and his family must have been able to plan and provide in such a way that they could find pleasure in their efforts (selecting just the right two of each animal), adventure in their voyage (surely there were new little furry creatures almost weekly), and joy as the splendor of the very first rainbow filled the sky, and the Lord's promise was fulfilled.

Could we be as diligent today? Can we as women be accountable and help meet the great challenge of economic stress by our wise stewardship over that with which the Lord has blessed us?

May we look for the stars and find satisfaction, even joy, in living according to the directions of these prophets and Apostles, whom the Lord has chosen to lead us in our day, is my humble prayer, in the name of Jesus Christ, amen.

President Kimball

Brother Ottley will now lead us in singing hymn no. 118, "Now Let Us Rejoice," following which we shall hear from Elder M. Russell Ballard, a member of the Presidency of the First Quorum of the Seventy. Elder Ballard will be followed by Elder L. Tom Perry of the Council of the Twelve.

The congregation sang "Now Let Us Rejoice."

Elder M. Russell Ballard

How to improve our family finances

My brothers and sisters, I have been asked to talk about family finances with you today.

In times of easy credit and increased inflation, many people find that they have too many expenses and too little income. One expert estimates that one-third of all American families are overextended. Last year tens of thousands of families filed for personal bankruptcy.

A recent survey conducted by the Welfare Services Department provided the following information: Fewer than one-half of the members surveyed have a year's supply of financial resources, and 89 percent feel the burden of increased taxes and inflation. Thirty-four percent of the Latter-day Saint women surveyed are employed outside the home. Fifty-seven percent of them are working to earn the money they need to meet basic family requirements. Thirty-one percent of the families are doing without many things, and 39 percent are not earning enough money to meet their basic needs.

These results demonstrate that today we as leaders need to teach our people that they must become efficient managers of their time and resources.

At the outset, as I address this subject, I emphasize that the most important principle we must live by today is the principle the prophet Alma taught his son Helaman: "But behold, my son, this is not all; for ye ought to know as I do know, that inasmuch as ye shall keep the commandments of God ye shall prosper in the land; and ye ought to know also, that inasmuch as ye will not keep the commandments of God ye shall be cut off from his presence." (Alma 36:30.)

My experience in the business community taught me that some

people can get locked into a daily routine that can stifle their initiative, courage, and vision.

From the Bible, the greatest teacher of all gave us the secret time and time again. He said, "If thou canst believe, all things are possible to him that believeth." (Mark 9:23.)

Brothers and sisters, what can we do to improve our family finances? May I suggest three important keys that will help us. They are *attitude, planning, and self-discipline.*

Attitude

The first key is to have a positive attitude toward ourselves.

Attitude is an important part of the foundation upon which we build a productive life. In appraising our present attitude, we might ask: "Am I working to become my best self? Do I set worthy and attainable goals? Do I look toward the positive in life? Am I alert to ways that I can render more and better service? Am I doing more than is required of me?"

Remember, a good attitude produces good results, a fair attitude fair results, a poor attitude poor results. We each shape our own life, and the shape of it is determined largely by our attitude. George Bernard Shaw wrote: "People are always blaming their circumstances for what they are. I don't believe in circumstances. The people who get on in this world are the people who get up and look for the circumstances they want, and, if they can't find them, make them." (*Mrs. Warren's Profession*, in *Plays by George Bernard Shaw*, New York: New American Library, 1960, p. 82.)

Too many people in our country today are developing the attitude that government is obligated to care and provide for them. In many ways, government has fostered this attitude,

but the members of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints know better.

Some people who lived through the Great Depression and the period following, when the government bestowed gratuities upon the people, developed a feeling that the world owed them a living. In that climate, the First Presidency said in 1936: "The aim of the Church is to help the people to help themselves. Work is to be re-enthroned as the ruling principle of the lives of our Church membership." (In Conference Report, Oct. 1936, p. 3.)

The love of work is an attitude that members of the Church must develop. In some ways, we have gone through a period of great prosperity which may, when history is written, prove to be as devastating as the Great Depression in its effect upon the attitudes of the people. President Harold B. Lee said, "Today we are being tested and tried by another kind of test that I might call the 'test of gold'—the test of plenty, affluence, ease—more than perhaps the youth of any generation have passed through, at least in this Church." (*Sweet Are the Uses of Adversity . . .*, Brigham Young University Speeches of the Year, Provo, 7 Feb. 1962, p. 3.)

The love for work needs to be reenthroned in our lives. Every family should have a plan for work that touches the lives of each family member so that this eternal principle will be ingrained in their lives.

Let me share an example from my own life that demonstrates the importance of attitude. When I returned from my first mission, I went to work for my father as a salesman. I was attending the University of Utah and working part time. I had a bad two-week period in which I earned less than ten dollars. My father handed my paycheck to me at a sales meeting in the presence of all the salesmen.

At the time, I thought he was being very hard on me. But later, I could see that this was his way to help me take a second look at myself. I was having a good time and not paying attention to my sales work. I determined that never again would I be the lowest paid person. My income increased from that day.

Now, what happened? I was selling the same merchandise from the same store in the same season of the year. What had changed? My new attitude made the entire difference. William James said that human beings can alter their lives by altering their attitudes of mind. (See *Vital Quotations*, comp. Emerson Roy West, Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1968, p. 19.)

Planning

Brothers and sisters, let us discuss the second key, *planning*, which means to think out beforehand how we intend to reach our goals in life. Do we all have a plan to increase our value where we are employed? Have we taken the time to write down specific goals, and have we designed a plan of action to become more effective and productive?

I learned recently that 75 percent of the hotel and restaurant managers in the Marriott Corporation started with the company as room clerks, busboys, bellhops, or cashiers. By improving themselves and their skills, they were prepared when opportunities opened to become managers. To increase our income, we may need to consider additional education. We may need to find a way, through careful planning, to attend night school or trade school or to take a correspondence course. Additional education often will improve our skills and increase the value of our services.

Parents need to teach children very early that a solid financial base is a very important element in a hap-

py home. We can do much with our young people to help them find satisfying, rewarding employment. We should encourage them to do well in their schoolwork and to learn to take advantage of opportunities that will help build a solid base for their future security.

Children need to explore many employment opportunities when they begin high school. Then when they marry and establish a home, they will be well on their way to a vocation or a trade that will return an income that will be sufficient to meet their basic needs.

We might feel that we have gone as far as we can go in our present job. If so, we should outline a plan of action, fast and pray for confirmation, and then move forward and make the change in employment.

A business of our own might increase our income. We must be wise, however, and analyze all factors and seek sound counsel from an attorney, accountant, banker, and most importantly, from a businessman who is successfully managing his own company. After developing a plan, we should pray for guidance; and when we receive an inward assurance that we should begin our own business, then we should do it. Remember the counsel of the Lord: "For which of you, intending to build a tower [and I add, or business], sitteth not down first, and counteth the cost, whether he have sufficient to finish it?" (Luke 14:28.)

Self-discipline

The third key is to practice *self-discipline* both at our work and as we attempt to reduce our expenses in our homes. Regarding the latter, Church leaders should set the example by seeing that stake and ward financial requests are kept to a minimum. Members should—

1. Avoid debt-pooling where exorbitant fees are charged. We may

want to consolidate debts using a bank or credit union loan that can be repaid at a sensible interest rate over a reasonable length of time. We may need to stop using our credit cards.

2. Exercise self-discipline by telling ourselves "We can't afford it" and refusing to take on further credit obligations.

An argument was overheard one day. One spouse said, while scolding the other for extravagant spending, "How many times do I have to tell you that spending money before you get it is economically unsound?"

"Oh," said the other spouse, "I don't know about that. This way, if you don't get the money, at least you have something to show for it."

Please be patient and carefully control your purchases so that you will not become enslaved to your creditors.

3. Make a budget and stick to it.

4. Cut expenses by distinguishing between wants and needs. Economize by controlling the use of goods, services, and energy.

5. Increase homemaking skills and have family members complete home and car repairs, when feasible.

6. Invest wisely. Avoid speculations and get-rich-quick schemes.

Attitude of success

Brothers and sisters, every one of us has the potential to improve and increase his earning capacity. We are far better off if we can improve and become more valuable on our full-time jobs than if we attempt to hold two jobs or to have mothers leave home to join the work force.

When we learn to expect more success than failure in life, we soon will develop an attitude of success.

"Nothing succeeds like success."

Remember—a positive attitude, a well-thought-out plan, and consistent self-discipline can help us im-

prove our circumstances. Applying these keys in our daily work will help produce more income, and practicing them in our homes will help reduce expenses. When we combine these principles with keeping the commandments of God, we can learn

to become better managers of our time and resources and become financially secure.

May the Lord bless all of us to this end, I pray humbly, in the name of Jesus Christ, amen.

Elder L. Tom Perry

A lesson on preparedness was taught by the Lord in the twenty-fifth chapter of Matthew. It tells about ten virgins awaiting a marriage celebration. Five were wise and prepared. Five were foolish and not prepared. The five wise virgins were welcomed into the marriage feast upon the arrival of the bridegroom. The five foolish virgins were off to the store buying supplies, and upon their return found the door closed. The cry to the Lord to open the door was met with the response, "I know you not."

Teach personal and family preparedness

My assignment today is as basic to welfare services as priesthood is to the Church. I've been given the assignment to bring an increased awareness to the priesthood and Relief Society leadership of the need to teach and to give basic training in personal and family preparedness on a regular, continuing schedule.

Let us, for a minute, examine our leadership report card to see how well we have fulfilled our assignment to teach the principles of personal and family preparedness.

Our rate of annual increase for the period from 1970 to 1978 in total fast-offering assistance was 15 percent. Then we had a little upset in our economy, and the rate last year jumped to 32.5 percent.

We look even worse when we examine total commodity assistance. For the period 1970-78, the annual

rate of increase in commodity assistance was 11.3 percent. Last year, the rate was a disastrous 53.5 percent. A little dip in the economy found the membership without oil for their lamps. Immediately it was necessary for those not adequately prepared to turn to the Church for assistance.

The results indicate that training of families in basic principles of self-reliance and independence over the past years has not been as effective as it should have been.

With such alarming results we must remind ourselves that the Church welfare system was never designed or intended to care for the healthy member who, as a result of his poor management or lack of preparation, has found himself in difficulty. It was designed to assist the membership in case of a large, physical disaster, such as an earthquake or a flood. It was designed to assist the ill, the injured, the incapacitated, and to rehabilitate them to a productive life. In far too many cases, members who should be making use of their own preparedness provisions are finding that there is nothing there and that they have to turn to the Church.

It is time to ask ourselves, What has created the problem of placing such a heavy burden on the Church to supply our welfare needs? My analysis of this problem would lead me to believe that, as leaders, we have spent far too much time in *administering* relief and far too little in *prevention* by having our families

prepared to administer to their own needs. It is time to teach the basics—again. It is time to make the number one priority of our welfare efforts personal and family preparedness. We must prepare now so that in time of need more of our members will be able to draw upon their own preparedness and not have to seek assistance from the Church.

I like the story of the old man in nineteenth-century New Hampshire who treasured his independence and self-reliance above all else in his life. He accounted it true Christianity that he cared for his own and helped others, and fiercely resisted the notion that he ought to accept help from any other mortal. When his aged wife died, he buried her himself, then dug his own grave and laid in it his open, homemade coffin. "When my time is coming," he said, "I'll climb in the box and fold my arms over my chest. Won't be no bother to no one. They can just nail down the lid and push in the dirt."

Train the family

President Marion G. Romney has said so often: "No self-respecting Church member will voluntarily shift the responsibility for his own maintenance to another. Furthermore, a man not only has the responsibility to care for himself; he also has the responsibility to care for his family." (*The Basics of Church Welfare*, address to the Priesthood Board, 6 Mar. 1974, p. 2.)

The home must be the heart of the welfare program. We must focus our training of personal and family preparedness to reach the family organization. We must teach that every family should be headed by an executive committee comprised of a husband and wife who will set aside sufficient time to plan for their family needs. If it is a single-parent family or an individual living alone, there is still need to organize time

and thought to establish goals for meeting needs.

It must start here. Every family has different needs. I notice the difference in my own family now that my children are married. Father and mother are now alone. Their needs have changed. A daughter with her own home and family, a son renting in a student housing project with his family, and a newlywed daughter and her husband, still students at a university—each has different needs, and these needs are changing each year.

Personal and family preparedness planning must begin with the family executive committee. Planning must be tailored to fit the circumstances of each family. Consideration must be given to their unique requirements in career development, financial and resource management, education, physical health, home production and storage, and social, emotional, and spiritual strength.

Each family organization should include a family council comprised of all members of the family unit. Here the basic responsibilities of the family organization can be taught to the children. They can learn how to make decisions and act upon those decisions. Too many are growing to marriageable age unprepared for this responsibility. Work ethics and self-preparedness can be taught in a most effective way in a family council. President J. Reuben Clark, Jr., has paraphrased an old statement. "All work and no play makes Jack a dull boy," he would say. "But all play and no work makes Jack a useless boy." (As quoted by Harold B. Lee, "Administering True Charity," address delivered at the welfare agricultural meeting, 5 Oct. 1968.)

How grateful I am for a father who had the patience to teach me the art of gardening. How frustrating it must have been in this teaching process to find a neat row of weeds still in the ground and a pile of dead

carrots on the ground after I'd completed one of my assignments. Our family was taught not only the art of stacking and rotating cans and bottles on shelves, but also how to grow and replace the fruits and vegetables necessary to fill the empty cans and bottles again.

Priesthood and Relief Society support family

The first-line support to the families in the Church organization is priesthood home teaching and Relief Society visiting teaching. These functions provide two important services. They keep the bishop, the quorum leader, and the Relief Society president adequately informed of the physical, emotional, temporal, and spiritual condition of the membership. They also have teaching opportunities and serve as a resource to provide some of the training to the families as they prepare for self-sufficiency.

The Melchizedek Priesthood quorum leader can help the head of the household by teaching the principles of welfare—how to love, to give service, to recognize what his stewardship is, to work honestly and diligently for his family and for others, and to consecrate his time and talents to the building up of the kingdom of God. He can train the home teachers on how they can get to know the families and be sensitive to their needs. When a member has special needs, the president can work with the bishop and other quorum members to see that those needs are met in a confidential and loving manner.

The quorum meeting begins to fill its purpose when it meets the needs of the members. It is there they can be taught how to develop the skills in all areas of personal and family preparedness.

The Relief Society president gives the same kind of strength and

support to the women of the ward as she trains the visiting teachers in the skills of compassionate service, as visits are made to the sisters and their needs are met confidentially with love and sensitivity.

The sisters are usually more effective in teaching gospel principles. They teach and practice skills of sewing, canning, drying, and other food storage methods. They teach nutrition and physical fitness. They emphasize reading and cultural arts skills. Overall there is a permeating spirit of love and giving, of industry, and serious attention to the skills of homemaking and gospel living.

So, priesthood and Relief Society, working together, bring the family to a realization that personal and family preparedness is living the gospel.

You may have read the story in the *ENSIGN* about the Hibbert family. (See *ENSIGN*, June 1980, pp. 41-42.) The husband and father of a large family was diagnosed as having terminal cancer. After the shock and fear were faced, the husband and wife counseled together and decided that the best thing they could do for their joy and peace of mind was to prepare themselves and their family for what was to come.

They chose to create family memories through shared experiences, to complete family histories, to have a year's supply of food and other necessities to meet the financial emergencies that would come. A will was prepared and all insurance and legal papers were put in order. The children were taught to care for one another and to take responsibility in the home.

Just weeks before the death of Brother Hibbert, their home was destroyed in a fire. With it went much of the food storage, but there was still the togetherness of a family that had learned to work together, to plan and prepare, and to face a difficulty head on. With the death of Brother

Hibbert, there was sorrow—but not grief. The family had developed the skills it takes to remain close and loving. They were prepared.

Need to place proper priorities

As you can see from the heavy responsibilities given to the quorums and the Relief Society, careful practical training must be given to those officers. This must be supplied by the ward organization, presided over by a bishop.

As chairman of the ward welfare services committee, the bishop directs all welfare services in the ward. He seeks out the needy and distressed. He coordinates the teaching of gospel principles and programs fundamental to welfare services, coordinates efforts to teach the law of the fast. He sees that members with special needs are assisted with the dignity and love so important to them. He coordinates confidential assistance to those in need. When necessary, he calls qualified resource specialists. (See *Welfare Services Resource Handbook*, 1980, p. 9.)

Supporting the bishop is a stake organization. The bishop can request assistance from the stake president in the training and qualifying of his leadership. The stake president has a high council and a stake Relief Society organization to furnish the training support required.

Look at the impact the Lord's organization can have on assisting the membership in their personal and family preparations as the work load is distributed down to a workable

level of effectiveness. At the stake level the ratio is one stake president to about 1,180 families. At the ward level the ratio is one bishop to about 108 families. At the quorum level the ratio is one quorum leader to about 60 families. The home teacher's ratio is one home teacher to 3 families.

The foundation of the Church welfare program is personal and family preparedness. The organizational support is in place to train and prepare the membership in this basic responsibility. What is needed is for each priesthood and Relief Society leader to place the proper priority on this important work.

Now, it may be that the old man in New Hampshire carried personal and family preparedness too far, with digging his own grave and all. But I would love to see all of our people moved by that same spirit of self-reliance and preparedness.

God grant us to see what must be done in our own wards and stakes, I humbly pray in the name of Jesus Christ, amen.

President Kimball

It will now be our pleasure to listen to President Marion G. Romney, Second Counselor in the First Presidency, who will be our concluding speaker.

Following President Romney's talk, we will sing the closing hymn no. 23, "Come, Ye Children of the Lord," following which the benediction will be offered by Elder Hugh W. Pinnock of the First Quorum of the Seventy.

President Marion G. Romney

Security: fruit of righteous living

Brothers and sisters: I have listened with interest this morning to what has been said. For forty years

now I have been coming to this building twice a year to receive instruction regarding what we today refer to as Church welfare services. Originally, this program was known as the

Church security plan; that is the name it was given when it was started. What was then meant by that title needs to be understood today; namely, that security, *true* security; comes only by living the principles of the gospel. *Security is the fruit of righteous living.*

The Book of Mormon contains the history of a people who over the course of a thousand years demonstrated the fruits of righteousness and of wickedness. Whenever they kept the Lord's commandments, they prospered in the land; when they were disobedient, they fell into wickedness, war, famine, and enslavement. Time and time again we read of families, tribes, and whole nations keeping the Lord's commandments and making covenants with him and being blessed by his Spirit. Because of righteousness, they prospered both spiritually and temporally. When they did not keep his commandments, they deteriorated both temporally and spiritually.

The Book of Mormon contains principles which, if we would follow them, could bring us true security in a world wracked by wickedness, fear, and a host of economic problems. I believe our people want to achieve true security, but many of us are not following the course which leads to it. Today, individuals and governments seem to think that they can achieve economic prosperity in spite of a spendthrift mentality. They spend and spend, mortgage and mortgage, pile up debts and obligations and thereby lose stability, lose security, and lose independence.

Welfare plan based on Christian principles

May I emphasize here that the point so easily forgotten is that *the Lord is interested in everything we do in our lives*: our families, our work, and our personal development. He has given eternal truths to guide

us in these matters. Further, he gives us his Spirit to help us apply these principles. But only as we follow him can we have security.

Recently, I reread some of the talks given by the Brethren at the time of the original announcement of the Church's so-called security plan. I was thrilled with the power and solemnity of the thoughts expressed by the Brethren. Here is a quote from President J. Reuben Clark, Jr.'s, statement made at the October 1936 conference, the day that President Heber J. Grant read a letter by the First Presidency establishing the Church security plan. Notice how President Clark emphasizes that this security plan is simply a true expression of the basic Christian tenets contained in the gospel. He said:

"We have proclaimed to the world, and we have proclaimed what we knew, that we have the Gospel plan, and that the Gospel plan not only takes care of our spiritual needs, but our temporal needs as well. . . . It teaches us how to live in a group under an organization and principles which enable us to live together as brothers and sisters, equal in all things insofar as we live for that equality.

"That places upon us a responsibility because this plan which has been given to us is a plan by which Christian rule can come and will come to the nations of the earth." (J. Reuben Clark, Jr., in Conference Report, Oct. 1936, pp. 113-14.)

Basics of Church welfare

On April 4, 1943, at this pulpit, we stated that the Church's security, or welfare, plan consists of three basic elements:

"First, every individual should value his or her independence and labor with all his might to maintain it by being self-sustaining. This the Lord enjoined upon us when from the Garden of Eden He sent forth our

first parents under the stern command, 'In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground' (Gen. 3:19).

"Second, next to himself, the responsibility for sustaining an individual rests upon his family—parents for their children, children for their parents. It is an ungrateful child who, having the ability, is unwilling to assist his parents to remain independent of relief.

"Finally, the individual having done all he can to maintain himself, and the members of his family having done what they can to assist him, then the Church, through the Welfare plan, stands ready to see that its members, *who will accept the plan and work in it to the extent of their ability*, shall each be cared for 'according to his family, according to his circumstances and his wants and needs' (D&C 51:3)." (Marion G. Romney, in Conference Report, Apr. 1943, pp. 27-28.)

Self-reliance

I'm sure that many of you old-timers have heard this doctrine repeated many times by the Brethren, but I wonder if perhaps some of our younger people, our young bishops and stake presidents, have taken the time to really grasp its meaning. More importantly, I wonder if we as a people, as a nation, and as a world community really understand the basic premise on which all of this rests—namely, *self-reliance*.

The principle of self-reliance grows out of a fundamental doctrine of the Church, that of agency. Elohim, in creating man and placing him on this earth, gave him his agency to act for himself.

"For," said he, "it is expedient that I, the Lord, should make every man accountable, as a steward over earthly blessings, which I have made and prepared for my creatures. . . .

"For the earth is full, and there

is enough and to spare; yea, I prepared all things, and have given unto the children of men to be *agents* unto themselves." (D&C 104:13, 17; italics added.)

Just as each individual is accountable for his choices and actions in spiritual matters, so also is he accountable in temporal matters. It is through our *own* efforts and decisions that we *earn* our way in this life. While the Lord will magnify us in both subtle and dramatic ways, he can only guide our footsteps when we move our feet. Ultimately, our own actions determine our blessings or lack of them. It is a direct consequence of both agency and accountability.

Family reliance

The principle of self-reliance is also given expression in a larger context, that of the basic unit of the Church—the family.

In the Church the concept of providing for one's family and of relying on one's family for growth, mutual care, and help (or *family reliance*) is equally fundamental to self-reliance. The family is the basic organizational unit of the Church. No agency or institution can or should replace the family. By sacred covenant and eternal priesthood government, the eternal family unit is established. The same covenant that obligates parents to care for their children obligates children to care for their parents when they need it. The commandment to "honour thy father and thy mother" (Ex. 20:12) extends to modern Israel and is required for all who are faithful members of the Church.

As a consequence of the principle of family reliance, we should realize that, generally, one has no claim on Church resources to resolve personal temporal problems and needs until the family has done all it can to help. This is the doctrine the

Lord established when he said:

"And after *that*, they have claim upon the church, or in other words upon the Lord's storehouse, if their parents have not wherewith to give them." (D&C 83:5; italics added.)

Church reliance

Finally, I suppose we could think of *Church reliance*; that is, when all has been done at the individual and family level, then the Lord has given instructions how we should provide for one another as a Church family. The extent of this care and the basis on which it is given, however, again must be bound to fundamental principles. May I share a very insightful thought on charity given by President Joseph F. Smith in the general conference of April 1898: (That, of course, was before the welfare program as we understand it.)

"Men and women ought not to be willing to receive charity unless they are compelled to do so to keep them from suffering. Every man and woman ought to possess the spirit of independence, a self-sustaining spirit, that would prompt him or her to say, when they are in need, 'I am willing to give my labor in exchange for that which you give me.' No man ought to be satisfied to receive, and to do nothing for it." (In Conference Report, Apr. 1898, p. 48.)

If every able person who seeks out his bishop for help followed this rule of charity, then true blessings would accrue to both giver and receiver. Everyone would feel good about contributing to the Church welfare plan when the needy come in this spirit. Motivated in this way, people in need desire to quickly become self-sustaining again; they also desire to contribute all they can to the program when they are back on their feet.

Gospel in action

It has been my desire today, brothers and sisters, to refocus our attention on the basic, fundamental principles of welfare services. I reiterate that welfare services is not just a program; it is the gospel in action. Its principles are the principles of the gospel. It is the Christian rule in temporal affairs. It is my desire that we learn from the scriptures and from the counsel of the living prophets and do our part to sustain ourselves, to care for our families, and with generosity and humility to contribute our share to maintaining those less fortunate than we.

May I close by quoting from King Benjamin (you've heard him quoted already today—King Benjamin, the great leader of the Nephites), who at the close of his ministry had this sage advice for the members of the Church who had lived under his kind and inspired leadership for many years:

"And behold, I say unto you that if ye do this ye shall always rejoice, and be filled with the love of God, and always retain a remission of your sins; . . .

"And now, for the sake of these things which I have spoken unto you—that is, for the sake of retaining a remission of your sins from day to day, that ye may walk guiltless before God—I would that ye should impart of your substance to the poor, every man according to that which he hath, such as feeding the hungry, clothing the naked, visiting the sick and administering to their relief, both spiritually and temporally, according to their wants.

"And see that all these things are done in wisdom and order." (Mosiah 4:12, 26-27.)

That we may have the wisdom and the discipline and live to implement these great principles is my prayer, in the name of Jesus Christ, our Redeemer, amen.

The congregation sang "Come, Ye Children of the Lord."

The benediction was given by Elder Hugh W. Pinnock of the First Quorum of the Seventy.

SALT LAKE TABERNACLE CHOIR AND ORGAN BROADCAST

The following broadcast, announced by J. Spencer Kinard, and originating with KSL Radio and Television, Salt Lake City, Utah, was presented from 9:30 to 10:00 A.M. on Sunday, April 5, 1981, through the courtesy of the Columbia Broadcasting System's network throughout the United States, parts of Canada, and through other facilities to several points overseas:

Announcer: Once more we welcome you within these walls with Music and the Spoken Word from the crossroads of the West.

CBS and its affiliated stations bring you at this hour the Mormon Tabernacle Choir from Temple Square in Salt Lake City, with Jerold Ottley conducting the Choir, John Longhurst, Tabernacle organist, and the Spoken Word given by Spencer Kinard.

(Choir without announcement: "Come, Come, Ye Saints"—arr. Cornwall)

Announcer: The Tabernacle Choir has opened today's broadcast of Music and the Spoken Word with an early Mormon pioneer hymn by William Clayton in a setting by former Tabernacle Choir director, J. Spencer Cornwall, "Come, Come, Ye Saints." The ladies chorus next sings the words of Stopford Brooke and the music of Robert Leaf, "Let the Whole Creation Cry, Glory to the Lord on High."

(Ladies chorus: "Let the Whole Creation Cry"—Leaf)

Announcer: We next hear the men's chorus of the Tabernacle Choir sing

"Thou Art Repose" by Franz Schubert.

(Men's chorus: "Thou Art Repose"—Schubert/arr. Riva)

Announcer: Not long ago a man in the southern part of the United States saw a nurse's hand holding an eyedropper. For most of us the sight would have been barely worth a glance. For him it was spectacular because it was the first thing he had ever seen. After fifty-one years of life an operation had given him sight.

And what amazing things he saw. "I never would have dreamed," he said, "that yellow was so . . . so yellow." Blades of grass and the hair on his arm intrigued him. A jet plane streaking across the sky or a sunset leave him speechless. "I can't wait to get up each day," he says, "to see what I can see." (*Deseret News*, Salt Lake City, 6 Mar. 1981, p. A-3.)

He has discovered a beautiful and fascinating world. Unfortunately many of us have grown partially blind to the things we see.

Elizabeth Barrett Browning once wrote:

"Earth's crammed with heaven,
And every common bush afire
with God;

But only he who sees, takes off
his shoes—

The rest sit round it and pluck
blackberries."

("Aurora Leigh," *The Oxford Dictionary of Quotations*, p. 97.)

The press of daily duties in this busy world can create cataracts on the eyes of our inner spirits and take the freshness and sparkle out of what we see. The pace of life today demands quickness of step and firmness of pur-

pose if we are to do what needs to be done. But if our eyes get so focused on the goal ahead that we cannot observe the scenery we pass along our way, we may miss one of the main purposes of our excursion through life.

Some of the most significant things we'll accomplish on this planet will have more to do with stopping to smell the roses than with keeping on the schedule.

Fresh, bubbling streams and blossoming flowers, mountains and moonlight—surely these were meant for more than just our subsistence, are worth more than just a casual glance.

To watch the wonder of God's creations is a form of worship whether one is in a wilderness or at a window box. There truly are, as Shakespeare said, "Tongues in trees, books in the running brooks, sermons in stones, and good in every thing." (Shakespeare, *As You Like It*, act 2, scene 1.)

(Choir without announcement: "Our Mountain Home So Dear"—Stephens)

Announcer: The Tabernacle Choir has sung the music of Evan Stephens set to the words of Emmeline Wells, "Our Mountain Home So Dear."

At the console of the Tabernacle organ, John Longhurst next plays

"Prelude in G Major" by Johann Sebastian Bach.

(Organ: "Prelude in G Major"—Bach)

Announcer: Today's broadcast is concluded with words and music from Handel's *Messiah* "Worthy Is the Lamb" and the "Amen Chorus."

(Choir: "Worthy Is the Lamb" and "Amen Chorus"—Handel)

Announcer: Again we leave you from within the shadows of the everlasting hills. May peace be with you this day . . . and always.

Announcer (on radio): This concludes the two-thousand six-hundred ninety-fourth performance, continuing the fifty-second year of this traditional broadcast from the Mormon Tabernacle on Temple Square, brought to you by CBS and its affiliated stations, originating with Station KSL in Salt Lake City.

Jerold Ottley conducted the Choir, John Longhurst was at the organ, the Spoken Word given by Spencer Kinard.

In another seven days at this same hour, Music and the Spoken Word will be heard again from the crossroads of the West.

This is the CBS radio network.

SUMMARY OF CONFERENCE MUSIC

The Tabernacle Choir furnished the choral numbers for the Saturday morning, Sunday morning, and Sunday afternoon sessions of the conference with Jerold Ottley and Donald H. Ripplinger conducting.

The music for the Saturday afternoon session was provided by the combined institute choir from Salt Lake, Weber, and Logan institutes of religion directed by Paul A. Hanks.

At the general priesthood meeting, a combined men's choir from the

Tabernacle Choir and the Mormon Youth Chorus furnished the music, directed by Robert C. Bowden.

Prelude, postlude, and interlude music and accompaniments on the Tabernacle organ throughout the conference sessions were played by Robert Cundick, John Longhurst, and Roy M. Darley, Tabernacle organists.

Francis M. Gibbons

Clerk of the Conference

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THE CHURCH OF
JESUS CHRIST
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